

Mahanaim, the 38 should be 39 ; p. 287, in the twentieth line, Josh. x, 16, should be Josh. xi, 16 ; p. 289, in the twentieth line, Γεδεά should be Γερεά ; *Q.S.*, 1908, p. 61, Phantia in the thirty-first line should be Rhantia ; p. 63, *Dion* in the twenty-fifth line should be *Divn*.

A few other corrections and additional remarks seem desirable : *Q.S.*, 1906, p. 143, in the fifth line of Note I, read "seven R. miles" instead of "six miles" ; p. 143, at the end of Note II the sentence beginning : "From the words of Mesha," belongs to Note III, and should be inserted after "Mádeba" in the second line of page 144. On the same page in Note IV substitute : "which is Dibon," for "which seems to be Diblathaim or perhaps Dibon."—On the identification of Jahzah (*ibid.*, Note IV) with *Rujm el-Jázel* compare Rule 4 (*d*), *supra*. The words : "received up into Jordan" (p. 145, Note VII) are Jerome's ; those of Eusebius are to the same effect. The parenthetical remark "(dated A.D. 534)," p. 219, in the last line but one, is inaccurate, Jerusalem being ranked as a patriarchate in that year ; yet the names "Lyza" and "Ason" may be, as in the original list, drawn up at the time.—Footnote b, page 302, seems to require correction. The identification of Mañuma and Anthedon in the MS. may be an error. According to Buhl (*Geographie*, p. 190), Gatt has recovered the name Tádâ (Anthedon) 25 minutes north of the port of Gaza, el-Mineh=Mañuma (? Minois).—Before "Maximinianopolis of the Greek lists" (footnote g, p. 303), insert "takes the place of."—*Q.S.*, 1908, p. 60, in the third line of the note on Nebaloth, read "before" for "between." The proposed identifications of some of the ecclesiastical towns and cities (*Q.S.*, 1907, pp. 43 *sqq.*) require a rediscussion, which must be reserved for a special note on a later occasion.

THE CULT OF BAAL AND ASTARTE IN ENGLAND.

By STANLEY A. COOK, M.A.

EVIDENCE for the worship of the great goddess Ashtôreth, or rather Astarte, in Palestine and Syria has been published in these pages from time to time ; it may perhaps be new to some readers of the *Quarterly Statement*—as it certainly was to me—that a few unmistakable traces of this cult are actually to be found in our own country. Needless to say, I do not refer to the many ingenious speculations concerning Phœnician traders in Cornwall,

or to the fantastic Hebrew etymologies wherewith the most innocent of English names have occasionally been tortured. The evidence in question has nothing to do with these, and, though doubtless familiar to British antiquarians, does not seem to be so well known as it deserves. It was on the occasion of a recent visit to the Museum, Tullie House, Carlisle, that I was struck by the unusual ornamentation on one of the Roman stones there exhibited. Prof. F. J. Haverfield gives the following description of it in the official catalogue :—¹

“No. 22. Altar of cream-coloured sandstone, found about 1700 at Corchester, the Roman settlement near Corbridge [between Hexham and Newcastle], three miles south of the Wall. It measures 49 inches in height and 20 inches in width : on the left side is a jug, on the right a patera, on the front a Greek inscription making a hexameter verse :

Ἀστάρτης βωμόν μ' ἐσώρας Πούλχερ μ' ἀνέθηκεν

‘Thou seest me, an altar of Astarte : Pulcher set me up.’

“Some years later another Greek inscription, set up to Heracles Tyrius, was found at Corchester ; it is now in the British Museum.”

This altar belonged to the “Netherby” collection (No. 1), formed by the late Dr. Graham, and for an account of its vicissitudes, together with full bibliographical information, reference may be made to the *Lapidarium Septentrionale* (published by the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle : London, 1875), No. 637. The inscription (for which see also Boeckh, *Corp. Inscr. Græc.*, III, No. 6807) explains itself and calls for no comment. On the other hand, it may be remarked that the jug, or *oenochoc*, with its very graceful lines and high neck, appears to me to differ somewhat from the ordinary Roman-British ware. The patera is, I believe, really a mirror ; the illustration in *Lap. Sept.* will allow others to test this opinion. The mirror is elsewhere associated with females, perhaps goddesses of the Astarte type² (*cf.* also above, p. 16).

¹ Reprinted from the *Transactions* of the Cumberland and Westmoreland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society, Vol. XV (1899).

² Yet it must be pointed out that the patera (?) and jug recur on an altar to Juppiter (Carlisle Museum, No. 7 ; *cp.* No. 80, where a jug and snake are on one side, a patera and knife on the other.)

As regards the second Greek inscription from Corchester, to which Prof. Haverfield refers, this also forms a hexameter line :

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙ ΤΥΡΙΩ ΔΙΟΔΩΡΑ ΑΡΧΙΕΡΕΙΑ

“To the Tyrian Heracles, Diodora the archpriestess.”

This stone is ornamented on the one side with a garland and on the other with the head of an ox and a sacrificial knife (see *Lap. Sept.*, No. 636 ; Boeckh, No. 6806).¹

It is difficult, at first sight, to determine under what circumstances the worship of Astarte and this Baal of Tyre reached our country. It is well known that under Roman influence the cult of Mithra spread throughout the Roman Empire as far west as England, and, when we recollect the popularity of Eastern cults in Rome, it does not seem improbable that the same indirect influence accounts for the evidence from Corchester.² The alternative suggestion is that among the Roman soldiers at Corchester were foreign mercenaries of veritable Semitic origin. This is not inconceivable, or improbable. It is very noteworthy that at a more westerly portion of the Wall, at Carvoran (the Roman Magna) near Greenhead, other traces of Semitic cults have been brought to light. Here was found an altar, apparently inscribed to the Heliopolitan Juppiter (*Lap. Sept.*, No. 296). More remarkable is a tablet with ten lines of Latin Iambic verse (*ib.*, No. 306), where Marcus Caecilius Donatianus does homage to Ceres, who, amid various attributes and identifications, is associated with the Virgo of the Zodiac and the “Syrian goddess.” Some light is thrown upon this by an altar found near Magna (No. 303, now at Trinity College, Cambridge), which was erected by the first cohort of the “Hamians” to the Syrian goddess. The inscription is of interest on account of the symbol or sign at the end of the first line :

D E A E S V R I +
A E etc.

¹ Both stones are reproduced by the Rev. J. C. Bruce, *The Roman Wall* (London, 1867), p. 340; *cp.* also A. Hübner, *Inscr. Brit. Lat.* (Berlin, 1873), p. 97.

² Thus, through the Romans themselves, we may no doubt explain the trace of the cult of Juppiter Serapis (*Lap. Sept.*, No. 745). It is, perhaps, unnecessary to remark that in the dedications *Deo* (or *Marti*) *Belatucadro* (and the like) we have a local deity and not some compound of Baal (*see* Bruce, *op. cit.*, pp. 247, 394).

To this we may add *Lap. Sept.*, No. 304, where the inscription DEE HAMMI SABI E (*deae hammiae*[?] *Sabi*[nus] *fecit*) may suggest the patron goddess of the "Hamians." From other inscribed Roman stones it seems that the "Hamians" were archers; they are mentioned among the soldiers employed by Hadrian at the building of the Wall, about 124 A.D. (*op. cit.*, p. 8), and about a dozen years later reference is made to the first cohort *Hamiorum Sagittar*[um] (No. 301).

It may be that among the sculptured stones discovered at Carvoran more evidence may be found. Fifteen of the most interesting specimens are said to be in the Museum at Newcastle; others, I understand, are in private possession. At all events, at Chesters, not very far from Corbridge, were found the remains of a draped statue of a female standing on some animal, highly suggestive of a goddess of the Astarte type (*see* Bruce, *op. cit.*, p. 162 *sq.*).

The identity of these "Hamians" is scarcely doubtful, and it is probably certain that the view which derives the name from Hamath in Syria is correct. Some independent support for this may be claimed in the fact that the near-lying Ituraea was the home of those famous archers who are frequently mentioned by Latin writers and by them are associated with Arabs and Syrians. The renowned Ituraean bowmen were employed by Caesar in the African war, and they formed the bodyguard of Mark Antony.¹ It is true they do not appear to be mentioned in the British Roman inscriptions, nevertheless there is sufficient evidence for the assumption that the "Hamians" of Magna, in the first half of the second century A.D., were archers of a stock closely related to the more familiar *Ituraei*. That they should have cherished their native cult so far from home is, of course, no matter for surprise; that they could have left traces of it in several places is not unlikely when one perceives that the first cohort has also left an inscription at Kilsyth in Scotland (Hübner, No. 1110.)

Circumstances oblige me to confine myself to the barest summary of such data as I have been able to come across—thanks to the courtesy of the Principal Librarian at Tullie House—and I leave it for others to throw more light upon the subject. In any case it is distinctly novel and unexpected to encounter in one's own country,

¹ See further, Hastings, *Dict. Bible*, Vol. II, p. 521; *Ency. Bib.*, cols. 2213 *sq.*

near the borders of England and Scotland, the material remains of a cult practised eighteen hundred years ago, which one is more accustomed to associate with the Ancient East, and the pedestrian who visits the sites where the followers of Astarte and the Baal of Tyre once maintained the worship of their deities will be amply repaid by the splendid views which delight the eye and stir the imagination.

CARLISLE,

15th September.

THE OLD HEBREW ALPHABET AND THE GEZER TABLET.

By STANLEY A. COOK, M.A.

THE Hebrew tablet which Mr. Macalister had the good fortune to unearth at Gezer has, as was only to be expected, aroused the keenest interest.¹ Palestine has provided but few specimens of its ancient writing, and with the exception of the famous Siloam inscription and the Moabite stone, Hebrew palaeography has to rely upon the numerous small objects—seals, gems, pottery stamps, weights—which continue to accumulate slowly. Even old funereal inscriptions are as yet unknown.² The more welcome, therefore, is this little fragment of limestone with the interesting questions it has raised. That of its date is not the least important. This is a problem which cannot be solved by its contents. It rests upon a careful comparison of the script with similar scripts which can be approximately dated, upon a study of the evolution of the characters, and upon a comprehensive survey of all the evidence which the problem involves. The Gezer tablet is undoubtedly old. According to Prof. Lidzbarski, "we have, perhaps, the oldest Hebrew inscription, at all events, one of the oldest of the Semitic inscriptions" (p. 26).

¹ See Mr. Macalister, *Q.S.*, 1909, pp. 16 *sq.*, 88 *sqq.*; Prof. Lidzbarski, pp. 26-29, 194 *sq.*; Prof. G. B. Gray, pp. 30-33, 189-193; Mr. E. J. Pilcher, p. 33 *sq.*; Prof. Ronzevalle, pp. 107-112; Dr. Daiches, pp. 113-118; Prof. Dalman, p. 118 *sq.*; also Prof. Vincent, *Revue Biblique*, 1909, pp. 243-269, 493 *sq.*; Prof. Marti, *Zeit. f. Alttest. Wissens.*, 1909, pp. 222-229. (*Q.S.*, 1909, pp. 26-34, with the two photographs of the tablet, have since been printed separately.)

² See the remarks of Prof. Vincent, *Canaan d'après l'Exploration Récente* (1907), p. 241 *sq.*