

SOME INTERESTING POTTERY REMAINS.

THE specimens of pottery here reproduced and discussed are from the collection of Mr. Herbert E. Clark, of Jerusalem, to whom we are indebted for the photographs. They are from tombs in the South foot of Tel el-Fül, exhumed in July, 1909; and Mr. Clark has rightly believed that they will be interesting to many readers, and especially to students. Mr. Clark's own description follows, and to it are appended remarks kindly contributed by Prof. R. A. S. Macalister:—

Plate I.—No. 1. Rudely made female figurine, in terra-cotta, with arms broken off, "Mother goddess," "Ashtaroth of the Canaanites," "Abomination of the Heathen." No. 2. Iridescent blue glass, inlaid with white and yellow paste, ointment vase, Phoenician work, found inside the two plates left and right, silted full of soil.

Plate II.—No. 1. Five terra-cotta ointment jars of the ancient Egyptian "Alabastrian" forms, two of which were found with their bronze spatula in them. No. 2. Terra-cotta "Child's rattle"?? ceremonial, probably to drive away evil spirits. No. 3. Three terra-cotta ointment jars, imitation of old Egyptian forms but rudely made, late Jewish Kingdom style of work. No. 4. Lamp of oldest Canaanite form, but like most of these articles, Jewish Kingdom work; thick and heavy compared to the pre-Israelite period; yet this has no foot as was usual at this time; lips forming nose of lamp, unusually pinched together for this period. No. 5. Three types of plates: first one, deep thick rim, half plate, half bowl, so to say; plate on books less deep, but thick rim; these shapes are made to-day and used by the peasants. Third one to right is a shallow disk of pottery, used for some kinds of dry foods and fruit. All ancient shapes and of fairly fine pottery, and all have a foot. No. 6. Jar of Canaanite shape, neck gone.

Plate III.—Articles, 18 oil jars or jugs of different ancient forms, specially interesting are those: first to right of centre one

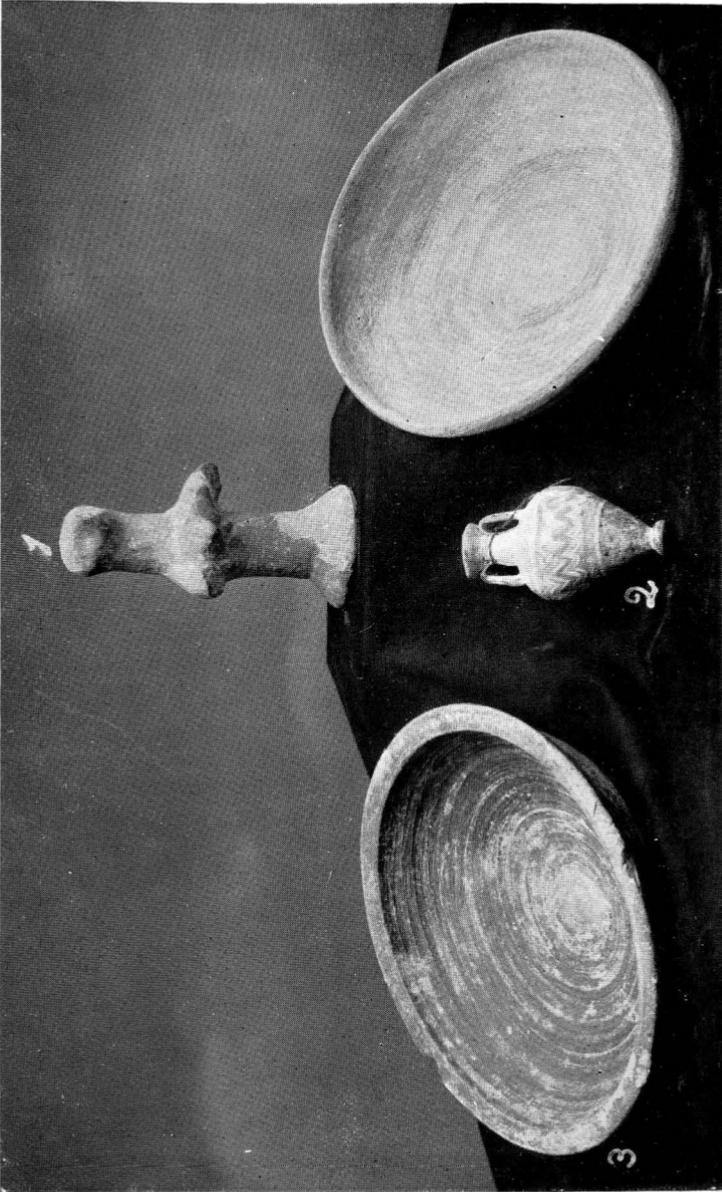
on books, in top line, black burnished pottery; second next to it, red burnished, but the burnishing is poor and irregularly done all over the surface; pottery thick and heavy, bad striving to imitate old work and old shapes; their ancestors found in the country a thousand years before, or several hundred at least. The most interesting jar is that in animal form with two legs, horns and nose gone, representing the Bull; also one of earliest emblems of man's deity; whether representing the constellation of the Bull, Power or Strength, and utility on earth, with the figure of Ashtaroth in Plate I, these speak loudly of the "Spiritual Backsliding" of Judaea.

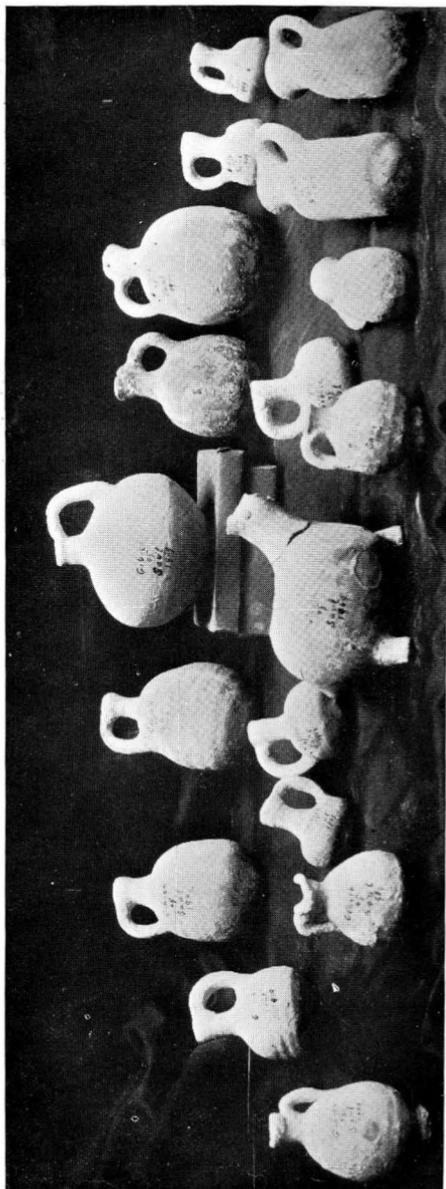
Plate IV.—Articles 1. Three water drinking jars, light gray pottery, forerunners of those made to-day at Beyrouth, Syria, in shapes called in Arabic "Courrāz," favourite drinking jars all over the country. No. 2. Milk-jugs, no doubt, especially second from left, it looks so similar to those of to-day in shape. No. 3. Dippers for dipping water or other liquids, these and No. 2 are of red pottery; also shape not earlier than the Israelite Kingdom and rather more Jewish, are particularly types of Judean hill country development. No. 4. Probably oil jar of large size and of old shape.

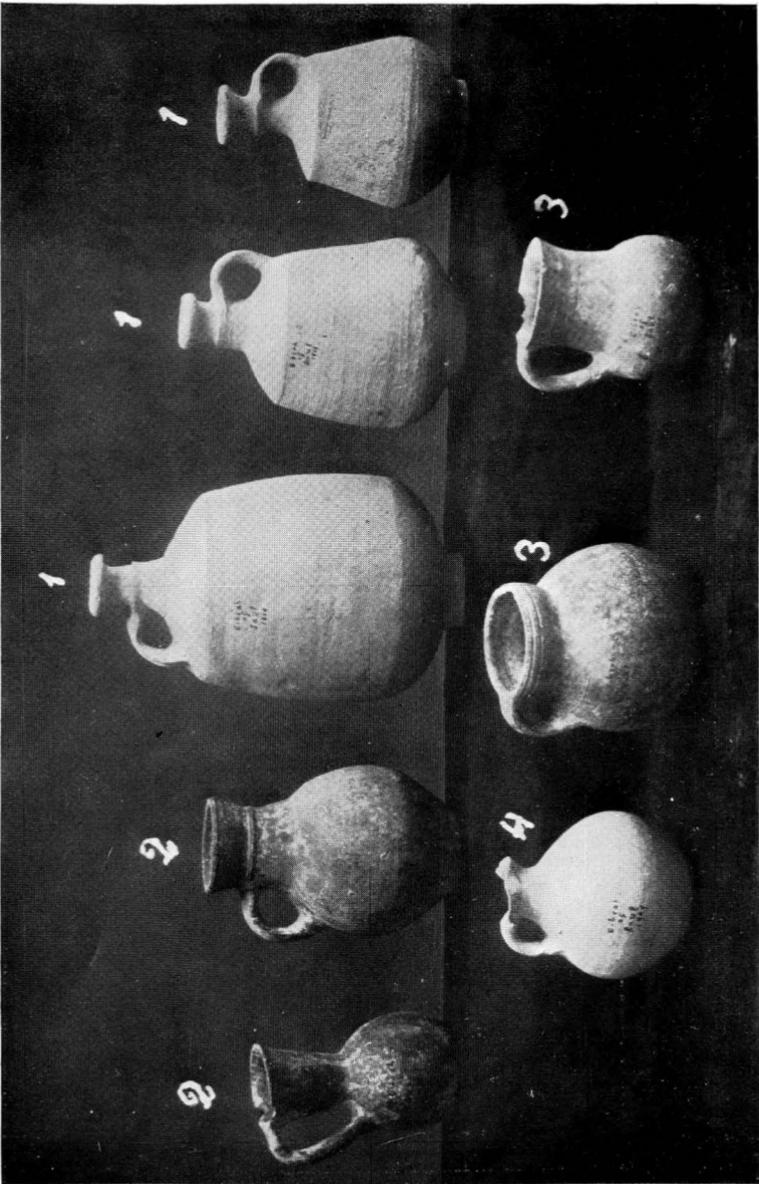
All of these specimens of pottery of these four plates, from several tombs, are of several dates, no doubt; yet dates between 900 B.C. and 500 B.C. They are all so "Hebrew Canaanite" in shape and not work. "Hebrew decadence" of the fine old ware of 600 to 900 years older. All a clean unmixed group of pottery, found without that of other periods, and at this site of Tell el-Fūl, believed to be Gibeah of Saul, they are very interesting, and especially Plate IV, except jar 4, as showing group of clear "V Semitic" production of shapes and style.

I have carefully examined the photographs sent by Mr. Clark, and his accompanying letter, and am pleased to find myself in almost complete agreement with him as to the dating and explanation of the various pieces. I might perhaps be inclined to assign some of them to a slightly later date than Mr. Clark seems to suggest, but the difference is in all cases inconsiderable.

Plate I.—The goddess figure is a common type, certainly Cypriote in immediate origin; note the characteristic beak-like face, and the







pillar form of the lower part of the body. The glass vessel is remarkably fine; it may be questioned, however, whether it is not Egyptian rather than Phoenician. It is more than doubtful if there ever was such a thing as an indigenous Phoenician art at all. If these four pieces belong to one tomb-group, I should be inclined to date them about 800-700 B.C.

Plate II.—These seem more heterogeneous, and are probably not one group. The lamp, No. 4, is a very late type, and I should date it after the fall of the monarchy of Judah. The long spout with parallel sides, and the broad flat brim (especially the latter), are late features. The imitations in terra-cotta of alabaster ointment jars are curious. The original alabaster vessels would probably be about the date of Ramessu III; the imitations would naturally be rather later, but not nearly (as I suppose) so late as the lamp. The rattle (No. 2) is a class of object that seems to be commonest about the beginning of the time of the Hebrew monarchy. The small ointment pots (3) are late—about the time of the lamp, or a little earlier. The same remark applies to the water-jar (6) with its so-called “umbrella” base. The plates (5) are not very characteristic, but I take it are about the same date as the ointment pots (3).

Plate III.—All these pieces are uniformly of the time at or immediately after the fall of the Hebrew monarchy. The rude animal figure is probably an imitation of Cypriote forms.

Plate IV.—The three vases marked 1 I should date to the Maccabean period; the jug, No. 4, also probably belongs to that date. The other vessels on this plate might be slightly earlier, but not much.

R. A. S. M.