

NOTES ON THE PALMYRENE INSCRIPTIONS.

By Rev. HARVEY PORTER, B.A., Professor of History and Archaeology
in the Syrian Protestant College, at Beirût.

The inscription on the Palmyrene bust (female figure) published in the January *Statement*, in the article by Dr. Post, I read as follows:—

Left side.

לְאַחֲרֵי
אֶת־בָּרְאָא
אַלְפִיתָה
צְבָדָתָה
וּבְרָעָה

Right side.

כְּאַרְבָּה
לְאַלְלָה
אַנְזָן
—
1333

In Hebrew characters—

חַבְלָה
אֶחָא בָּרָה
חַלְפִיתָה
בָּר בְּרָעָה
וּבְרָעָה

בִּירָח
אַלְלָה
שְׁנִית
461

Alas !
Aḥā, daughter of
Haliftha,
son of Bar'aa,
Zebda'tha.

In the month
of Alal (September)
in the year
461 = (150 A.D.).

The final letter in the fourth line of the left inscription may be ה instead of נ. Either one is common as an ending of Palmyrene names. The first two names in this inscription I do not remember to have seen before. Haliftha seems to have the same root as Halifi, found in De Vogué, *Ins. Sem.*, No. 9. The last name is a compound of Zebed, which occurs frequently; the last part may be referred to עַתָּה, *opportunity*—the whole meaning *a timely gift*. It is probably the same as עֲתִי, found in De Vogué, *Ins. Sem.*, Nos. 5, 63, 74, &c. He refers the latter part of the name to עַתָּה, *Athe*—a certain divinity worshipped by the Syrians. The name would thus indicate the *gift of Athe*. The name Bar'aa may be referred to בְּרָעָה, *a gift*.

The correct readings of the inscriptions on the large slab of five figures published in Dr. Post's article on his journey to Palmyra in the *Quarterly* for January, 1891, are as follows, beginning from the right, which I number 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

No 1, marked (e)—

אֶלְעָזָר
בָּנָן
בָּנָן

In Hebrew characters as follows—

צַלְמָבָרָעָה
בֶּן בָּרָנָנוּ בֶּן
בָּרָנָנוּ

“The Statue of Bar’atū, son of Barnabū, son of Barnabū.”

No. 2, marked (d)—

בָּרָעָתָה
בֶּן
בָּרָנָנוּ אֲחֹדוּ

In Hebrew—

ברעתה בר
ברנבו אחודי

“Bar atah, son of Barnabū, his brother.”

It is interesting to note that the name Bar’atah (or Bar’athah) is the same as that found upon the gravestone discovered at South Shields, published by Wright, in the “Transactions of Society of Bib. Archæol.,” vol. vi. The same name is found in an inscription on a bust published by Simonsen (*Skulpturer og Indskrifter fra Palmyra*, Kjøbenhavn, 1889). Bar’atu is essentially the same. We find many of the Palmyrene proper names recurring in the same family or in different families, sometimes identical, or only with slight variation as above. The same peculiarity is observed still among the Syrians and Arabs. They employ a few favourite names generation after generation. This becomes a source of great confusion in determining the personality of historical characters. We cannot infer that the person indicated on the monument found at South Shields belonged to the family commemorated by our sculptured slab, but yet it is quite possible, as that person was a Palmyrene.

No. 3, marked (g)—

צַלְמָבָרָעָה
בֶּן
אֲחֹדוּ

In Hebrew—

ברנבו בר ברנבו
אחוהדי

“Barnabū, the son of Barnabū, his brother.”

No. 4, marked (b)—

שְׁבָעָגֵר בֶּן
בָּנָבָע אֶחָד

In Hebrew—

נוֹבָגָרִי בֶּן
בָּרְנָבָע אֲחָדִי

“Nabûgrî, son of Barnabû, his brother.”

No. 5, marked (a)—

עַמְתָּהָע (בָּנִי)
(בָּנִי מִם (בָּנִי)
עַמְתָּהָע
אַמְתָּהָע

In Hebrew—

עַמְתָּהָע (בָּרָת)
מִקְיָמָה (בָּר)
גְּרִיבָן
אַמְתָּהָע

“‘Amtha’ (daughter) of Moqmû, son of Ghribûn, their mother.”

The name Barnabû, which occurs so many times in these inscriptions, is found also in De Vogué, *Ins. Sem.*, No. 73. He derives it from Bar-Nebo, “Son of Nebo,” which is doubtless correct.

SENNACHERIB'S CATASTROPHE AT NOB.

ISAIAH x, 28-34.

By Rev. W. F. BIRCH.

If any should object that Isaiah x does not refer to Sennacherib, or that Nob was not the scene of his disaster, I shall make good my title by producing evidence sufficient to satisfy such as believe that Zion, the City of David, was solely on Ophel (so called). Those who profess to believe *on evidence* that it was situated elsewhere, are obviously themselves already proof against all I can say.

My earliest attempt in *Quarterly Statement*, 1877, 51, to identify Nob was, I now see, doomed to failure from the first, since I did not know (1) how to deal with profane writers (*e.g.*, Josephus and the son of