

## NOTES FROM CONSTANTINOPLE.

I took advantage of my late stay in Constantinople to visit the Musæum with a view of ascertaining what antiquities may be stored there which came from Syria. The director, Hamdi Bey, a distinguished artist, only lately appointed to the post, is actively employed in cataloguing and arranging the collection, which is far larger and more valuable than I had supposed. He received me with great courtesy, but was, unfortunately, not able to give much information, as he was as yet very little informed as to the contents of the Musæum. His predecessor appears to have left everything in confusion. There is as yet no catalogue, and the objects are not marked, nor is it known in most cases where they were found. The coins are now being arranged and classed, but the statues, inscriptions, and bas reliefs are only very roughly divided out as Roman, Assyrian, and Egyptian. It appears that the pottery and many of the metallic articles have only been catalogued by *weight*—"ten pounds Cyprus pottery," or "twenty tons bronze statues," etc., etc., a method which perhaps is scarcely sufficient to mark the difference of value between the various objects. An attempt was however made a few years ago to classify the broken statues by placing all the legs in one case, the heads in a second, the arms in a third, etc., but this appears to have led to some uncertainty in the end as to the parts which together made up the original statue.

The only antiquities which I was able to recognise were the famous Hamath stones and the great statue from Gaza. The former were classed as Assyrian antiquities. I found no other Hittite inscriptions, and the Gezer stones were not in the Musæum, so far as I could learn, nor was any one among the officials aware of their existence, although they were seized by the Governor of Jerusalem in 1874. Hamdi Bey had heard of the Siloam inscription, of which he was anxious to obtain a copy. He complained greatly of the way in which the regulations concerning antiquities were disregarded by explorers, and I had great satisfaction in explaining to him that the Society by which I was sent out had never transgressed in this respect since the regulations were first promulgated in 1874.

*The Gaza Jupiter.* This great statue was discovered, in 1860, by the natives at Tell 'Ajjûl south of Gaza, and we owe its preservation to the exertions of the Rev. W. Shapira, the missionary. The Arabs had at once commenced to break up the statue, and had succeeded in greatly damaging the face. Mr. Shapira persuaded the governor to set a guard over the place, and the antiquarians of Palestine owe him a debt of gratitude for having prevented the entire destruction of this unique monument. A paper descriptive of the statue will be found in the *Quarterly Statement*, with the measurement of its principal proportions. I now send a copy of the sketch which I have just made from the



original in the porch of the Musæum. The suggestion which I ventured to make at the time seems to me to be fully borne out, and there can, I imagine, be little doubt that the figure is intended for a Jupiter. The principal deity of Gaza was called Marna (*i.e.*, מרנא "our Lord"), and was worshipped as late as the fifth century A.D. (Epiphanius *Adv Hæret*). He was a deity who controlled the rain, and his temple was destroyed by St. Porphyrius (*Acta Sanct*). According to Lenormant he was a god similar to the Cretan Jupiter and the Phœnician Eshmun—the chief among a group of seven or eight deities (*"Lettres Assyriologiques,"* Vol. II, Letter V, p. 165, *seq.*). These seven *Cabiri* or "great ones" appear to have all had temples in Gaza. That of Marna, destroyed by the Christians, was round, with two outer porches or circles—a kind of Druidical circle perhaps. His other titles were "the living," "the eternal," "the universal," "the everlasting." It seems probable that the statue at Constantinople may be that of the Jupiter Marna of Gaza. The nose and face have

been damaged, but the arrangement of the hair reminds one of the classic Jupiter. The right arm is broken above the elbow, the left appears to have been sawn off. The figure was seated on a bench, but the legs have also apparently been sawn off in front. These mutilations had been, I believe, effected before the statue was discovered, and it seemed to me possible that the pious pagans may have buried their Jupiter to save him from the Christians, and may have been obliged to divide it for facility of transport. Excavations should certainly be made at Tell 'Ajjûl, as the rest of the statue may yet remain buried as well as the Venus of Tetramphodos, a place apparently in Gaza itself. A curious tradition of buried treasure, and of a phantom calf which guards it, exists at Tell 'Ajjûl ("the calf's mound"), and it is perhaps possible that a temple stood on the hillock.

*Sta Sophia.* I also paid a visit to this famous church of "Holy Wisdom" founded by Constantine, and built by Justinian, and was shown the curious hand mark on the wall and the "sweating pillar," with a hole in the marble about the depth of a finger. It seems to have been made by innumerable pilgrims putting their fingers into the crack in the metal covering, to feel the supposed perspiration of the marble. No doubt this sacred mark is to be classed with the finger mark of Gabriel at Jerusalem, and other much venerated prints on rocks. I found the

flagging of the upper galleries covered with Greek mason's marks, such as I have never seen except here and at Baalbek ; some of these marks were single letters, but others seemed worth attention for comparison with the marks which I have noticed on pillars at Ascalon and at 'Ammân. They are as given below.



The second, if turned upside down, is just like a ligatured Phœnician inscription.

But another observation of greater interest referred to the wooden beam which runs from pillar to pillar in the upper order of columns. I have had occasion to mention this as an Arab architectural feature, and at first supposed that the beams in this case also had been added by Moslem restorers of the church. The beam is not structural, but affords an additional brace to the pillars, and spans the round arches just as it does in the mosques at Jerusalem, Damascus, and Cairo. I found, however, finally, that one of these beams is ornamented with well cut Greek crosses, in relief, evidently the work of Byzantine masons. Mr. Fergusson will no doubt welcome this little fact (unless he has previously himself observed it) as confirming his views of the Christian origin of the Dome of the Rock. It would, however, be interesting to know whether Byzantines and Arabs alike may not have borrowed this kind of tie-bar from Sassanian architects.

I also observed a very peculiar cross, with various devices at the ends of its arms, occurring on some of the capitals. This cross is exactly like one which we have recently found in a Byzantine ruin in Moab.

The old walls of Stamboul are built of moderate square masonry, in courses alternating with one or more courses of flat bricks. The original work is Byzantine, and the structure has been adopted by the Venetians and later restorers of the walls. This structure we have never found in Palestine, but I found a fragment of wall so built at Kadesh, and the present observation seems to confirm the impression I then obtained that the ruin in question was part of the Roman town of Laodicea, which rose on the ruins of the older site of *Kedes*.

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## NOTES ON MR. TRELAWNEY SAUNDERS'S INTRODUCTION.

THE Surveyors of Western Palestine owe their best thanks to Mr. T. Saunders for the appreciation and discriminating praise which he bestows on their work. Criticism from a geographer so well acquainted with the