

initiated masons in England, although to an outsider such titles as Solomon's Seal, the Mason's Hammer, &c., seem rather to indicate the loss of the true meaning.

It should be noted that masons' marks do not appear to have been used by the Jews, or in Byzantine times, or by the Arabs of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. They thus serve in Syria to distinguish the work of the Crusaders, and the traveller who wishes to distinguish the somewhat similar structures of the later Christians and early Arab conquerors, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, will obtain in the discovery of masons' marks one of the most certain distinctions he can generally hope to find.

C. R. C.

HAMATH INSCRIPTIONS.

As everything touching on the decipherment of the new hieroglyphics must be of interest, I may perhaps venture to call attention to a comparison which struck me forcibly when, after seeing the Hamath stones in the museum at Constantinople, I had, in the same year, an opportunity of inspecting the very ancient wooden hieroglyphics from the tomb of Hossi preserved in the Boulak Museum at Cairo. These Egyptian hieroglyphics are in relief like the so-called Hittite texts, and some of the symbols at least appear to be identical.

The bull's head is a symbol on Hosi's tomb (as a hieroglyphic), and on the Hamath stone No. 3, or the Jerabis text No. 3.

The antelope's head occurs also in each of three texts just quoted.

The bird in profile (the Egyptian Aleph) is also found on the Jerabis inscriptions.

A pillar on a square base, found in the Hamath stones, occurs also at Sakkarah.

The knife blade, a common constituent of Egyptian hieroglyphic letters, is also found on the Hamath stones.

The head of Im-hotep, or Horus, with the finger to the mouth, is very frequently reproduced on the Hamath and Jerabis stones.

The human foot, a well-known Egyptian symbol, is found on the longer inscription from Jerabis.

The oval, which resembles the eye, is an Egyptian symbol, and seems to recur on Jerabis No. 3, and in other cases.

The hand extended, or holding a dagger, is common on the Jerabis and Hamath stones; on the tomb of Hossi, in Egypt, the extended hand is also a symbol.

The human head is found on Hamath stones and Sakkarah hieroglyphics.

The cross, not uncommon on the Hittite stones, may be connected with the Egyptian Ankh, or with the Assyrian cross.

It may also be noticed, as cognate to the present subject, that some of

the emblems found on the brass plate obtained by M. Peretie from Palmyra (and which resemble closely the emblems found at Bavian over the king's head) are also identical with symbols on the Tomb of Hossi, or in the hieroglyphic text from Sakkarah, figured by Perrot, which appears also to be very ancient. One of the emblems of Bavian is also identical with one frequent on the Hamath and Jerabis inscriptions; but the Bavian, with other Babylonian emblems, appear to symbolise the planets rather than to form inscriptions. Herodotus (II, 91 and 102) gives a curious account of a mark on the columns of Sesostris (now recognised by Professor Sayce as Hittite monuments), which the historian regarded as indicating derision of effeminate enemies. It seems possible that this mark is recognisable in the oval ring of the Hamathite inscriptions.

These remarks are offered with much diffidence, because it is possible that such comparisons have already been made by the learned authorities who have studied the Hamath inscriptions. It is, however, possible that a careful comparison of the Egyptian and Hittite symbols, by a scholar thoroughly conversant with hieroglyphics, might lead to interesting results, and if a cursory comparison leads to the identification of ten symbols as more or less intimately connected, longer study might, perhaps, give more definite indications. The Egyptians, like the Hittites, were an Asiatic people. They seem to have brought their system ready made with them when they entered the delta, and there is thus no *prima facie* improbability in a common origin having existed for Hittite and Egyptian characters.

C. R. C.

THE NORTH BORDER OF ZEBULON.

THE north boundary of Zebulon is one of the most difficult to draw of all the tribe borders. The southern line has been greatly elucidated by the Survey identifications of Nehallal, Sarid, Maralah, and Abes. On the north side the line has been indicated by the new sites for Hannathon, Neiel, Achshaph, and Beth Dagon, but it will be found (see "Handbook to the Bible," p. 268, 3rd edition) that Dabbasheth remains unknown. The verse in which this name occurs reads thus:—

"And their border went up towards the sea (or west) and (to) Mar'alah, and reached to Dabbasheth, and reached to the river (Nakhal) in face of Jokneam" (Josh. xix, 11).

It seems quite possible to understand that Dabbasheth is here mentioned as at the opposite extremity to the Kishon, or river facing Jokneam, and in this case it is to be sought on the north border. The latter is described in two verses of the same chapter (verses 14 and 27) as running from Hannathon (Kefr 'Anân) to the Valley of Jiphthah-el ("opened by God"), and again as going from Beth Dagon east to Zebulon (apparently, as in Josephus, also 2 "Wars," xviii, 9; 3 "Wars," iii, 1, a town), and to the Valley