

polished. One can hardly judge for what purpose it was used. For bathing it was not convenient, for a drinking trough for animals it was too costly; so I think it may have stood in the garden of a nobleman, to keep rare fish in. On account of its weight it could not be removed by the fellahin, and to break it they feared for the evil which comes always when such things are destroyed.

The late Russian Archimandrite thought the place had been a Christian monastery, and made some endeavours to buy it, in order to restore it again, as a habitation for monks and priests. To me it seems that this place was once in the area of the Jewish Bethphage, as a road coming up from Jericho passes near it, going towards Jerusalem, just over the summit of Mount Olivet; perhaps the road which David used when fleeing before his son Absalom. If one coming up this road wished to go to Bethany he had to pass very near this village or town; and when Jesus went from Bethany towards Jerusalem, coming up from Bethany this place was lying over against that from which the disciples could fetch the ass and bring it to the road, where in Christian times the Chapel of Bethphage was put.

ON THE LATIN INSCRIPTION FOUND BY DR. BLISS BEHIND THE GATE OF NEBY DAUD.

I.—By the Rev. Canon DALTON, C.M.G.

i. THIS inscription was probably cut not earlier than the spring of 115 A.D., nor later than the summer of 117 A.D. It runs:—

“JOVI O[PTVMO] M[AXIMO] SARAPIDI
PRO SALVTE ET VICTORIA
IMP[ERATORIS] NERVAE TRAIANI CAESARIS
OPTVMI AVG[VSTI] GERMANICI DACICI
PARTHICI ET POPVLI ROMANI
VEXILL[ARIUS] LEG[IONIS] III CYR[ENAICAE] FECIT.”

(*Quarterly Statement*, 1895, p. 25 and p. 130.) The size of the stone has since been given by Dr. Bliss. He states that its length is 2 feet 9 inches, and its height 1 foot $6\frac{3}{4}$ inches. The letters of the inscription are arranged in six lines. The letters in the first line are $3\frac{1}{8}$ inches long, those in the second line $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches, those in the third line $2\frac{1}{6}$ inches, those in the fourth line $2\frac{2}{8}$ inches, those in the fifth line $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches, the remains of those in the sixth line (the lower portion of these letters having been broken off) measure $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The exact arrangement of the letters is shown in the photograph of the stone given in the *Quarterly Statement* for 1895, p. 130.

In October, 97 A.D., Trajan was adopted by the Emperor Nerva, who gave him the rank of *Cæsar*, and the names of *Nerva* and *Germanicus*

(the latter in recognition of the great success he had achieved in command of the legions on the Rhine frontier), and shortly afterwards the title of *Imperator*. His title, then, would be *Imperator Cæsar Nerva Traianus Augustus Germanicus*. The Emperor Nerva died January 27th, 98 A.D., after a reign of sixteen months, and was succeeded by Trajan, then at Cologne. The new Emperor went, even before he made his official entrance into the capital of the Empire, from the Rhine to the Danube, where he stayed the winter 98-99 A.D.; he went not to attack the Dacians at once, but to prepare for the war. In March, 101 A.D., Trajan left Rome for his campaign in Wallachia and Moldavia against the long-formidable Daci, against whom he now led the 1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th, 7th, 11th, and 13th legions. After his victory over their king, towards the close of that year, he assumed the title *Dacicus*, and entered Rome in triumph in 103 A.D. In 105 A.D. he was engaged in a second campaign against the Daci, and, the Danube having been bridged at Severin, penetrated into the heart of Transylvania. He entered Rome in triumph a second time in 106 A.D. The colonists of Latin race and speech he then settled in the conquered lands were the direct ancestors of the present Roumanians, who thus claim to be Romans by blood and tongue. The sculptures on his column at Rome commemorate these victories over the Daci, though the column itself was not dedicated till 113 A.D.¹ During these six years (106 to 113 A.D.) he would appear to have remained at Rome superintending the erection of his many great buildings of public interest and utility, and devoting himself to the civil administration of the Empire. "The monuments of Roman jurisprudence contain many examples of Trajan's legislation. The *Replies* he addressed to the unceasing questions of the prefects and magistrates, were incorporated in the laws of the Empire, and retained their force for many generations. He qualified himself for the task of propounding or applying legal principles, by assiduous labour in the administration of existing law. Trajan exchanged the toils of war for the labours of the forum. Like the great statesmen of the Republic, he returned from the camp to the city to take his seat daily at the tribunals, with the ablest judges for his assessors; he heard appeals from the highest courts throughout his dominions, and the final sentence he pronounced assumed the validity of a legal enactment. The clemency of Trajan was as conspicuous as his love of justice, and to him is ascribed the noble sentiment that it is better that the guilty should escape than the innocent suffer." To this period belongs his famous correspondence with Pliny the younger regarding the Christians in Bithynia. S. Ignatius, of Antioch, was martyred in the public games at Rome, held probably October 17th (the anniversary date of Trajan's adoption by Nerva), some year between 110 A.D. and 118 A.D.

In the autumn of 113 A.D. Trajan's presence was required on the eastern Asiatic frontier of the Empire, as it had been formerly on the northern

¹ These campaigns as shown in detail on that "chiseled picture book" are described at length in Mommsen's "Provinces of the Roman Empire," vol. i, pp. 221-227, English ed. 1886.

European frontier. He accordingly then left Rome for his Parthian expedition: he passed through Athens and Asia Minor and wintered at Antioch. In 114 A.D. he subdued greater and lesser Armenia, and consolidated the Roman power between the Euxine and the Caspian, between the Euphrates and the Caucasus. The Senate then conferred formally upon him the title of *Optumus*. Trajan is said to have been more proud of it than of any other, inasmuch as he regarded it as a compliment to his character rather than to his exploits. No other emperor was ever honoured with this appellation. As early as 103 A.D. the title *Optumus* appears upon his coins and medals; but it is from 114 A.D. that it becomes no longer an epithet but an inseparable part of his name, and as such *then precedes even Augustus*. Very shortly afterwards he was designated *Parthicus*. He wintered again at Antioch, and during his stay there the great earthquake occurred in January, from which he narrowly escaped with his life. In the spring of 115 A.D. he again left the Syrian capital for the East, and after bridging the Tigris entered Babylon and Ctesiphon, the Parthian capital. At the latter place he wintered, and the title *Parthicus* was confirmed to him, by his soldiers, at the conclusion of this expedition, the most brilliant in the rapidity and extent of its conquests of any exploit of the Roman arms. Assyria and the modern Kurdistan, as well as the sites of Alexander's greatest victories, Arbela and Gaugamela, had been brought beneath the sway of the City of the Seven Hills. In 116 A.D. he sailed down the Tigris, and launched his bark upon the Persian Gulf, when, seeing a vessel sailing to India, he regretted he was no longer young enough to go thither himself, and returned to Babylon. Meanwhile the so-recently subjugated nations of the East were ominously agitated, and the Jewish insurrection so long impending and fomented by industrious intrigues, wherever the Dispersion were in any force, burst forth against the Roman arms in Palestine and in Parthia, Mesopotamia, the North African coast, in parts of Libya about Cyrene, Egypt, and Cyprus. In 117 A.D. this general rebellion of the Jews throughout the East was crushed by Lusius Quietus, originally a Moorish chieftain who had volunteered into the Roman service at the head of a band of mercenaries, but who, like the Moor Othello afterwards at Venice, had now become the greatest of his adopted country's captains. Trajan himself, however, fell ill; he had not hesitated to keep the field through all the summer heat, and leaving the army in the East under the charge of Hadrian, set off homewards to Italy. He only got as far as Selinus in Cilicia, where, worn out after a very active and hardy life of 65 years, he died of dropsy and paralysis, August 11th, 117 A.D., after an eventful reign of 19 years. The first of the Cæsars who had met his death at a distance from Rome and Italy: the first whose life had been cut short in the actual service of his country. His ashes were conveyed to Rome in a golden urn, and deposited at the foot of his column: the first Roman who received the honour of being allowed to repose after death within the walls of the city. Mommsen says, "Even after death the honour of a triumph was accorded to him,

and hence he is the only one of the deified Roman Emperors who even as god still bears the title of Victory."

From an examination, then, of the several imperial titles we see that the limits of time within which it is possible that this inscription could have been cut, are very clearly defined. We may regard it either as a votive thankoffering "for the welfare and victory of Trajan and the Roman people," after that had been completely achieved in the summer of 117 A.D. This is its latest possible date. Or it is just possible we may, perhaps, be allowed to regard it as an anxious prayer put up for the success of the Eastern campaign, while that was yet in progress, and before the Jewish insurrection had been finally quelled. In that case the title *Parthicus* will give us our earliest limit. News of this designation, applied to the Emperor in Rome, could not well have reached the East before 115 A.D.¹ This is the earliest date it could have been cut. But our vexillary is more likely to have awaited the soldiers' formal ratification of the title to their general, before using it in an inscription; and the probabilities would appear to be that the stone was engraved as a votive thankoffering in the early months of 117 A.D.

2. So far as to the date of the inscription. Next, as to the man commemorated. In view of what is to follow, it will be well for us to have as vivid a presentment of him before our minds as possible. The slight sketch of his career necessitated above, when merely tracing the dates of the various titles bestowed upon him by the Senate and people of Rome, has been enough perhaps to show him to us as a man of singular sense and vigour, from early youth trained in the camp. Trajanus, his father, had commanded the 10th legion at the bloody storming of Joppa, under Titus, in the Jewish war. Trajan himself was a strict disciplinarian, and this, united with his genial demeanour, had gained him the love and confidence of the legions alike in Spain, and in Germany, in southern Russia, and in eastern Armenia. But his courage and self-denial, his valour and generosity, his minute vigilance and unwearied application made him an able ruler, and as great a statesman as he was a captain. He was a wise, liberal, just, prudent, beneficent administrator; his virtue of moderation, his personal modesty, and anxiety for his subjects' well-being were the cause of the amazing popularity he acquired in the discharge of his public duties. The construction of canals and roads, theatres, and aqueducts undertaken on so vast a scale under his auspices throughout the Empire, witness to this day how his administration combined genuine magnificence with economy. "Trajan enjoyed also the distinction, dear in Roman eyes, of a fine

¹ Mommsen, "Provinces of the Roman Empire," vol. ii, p. 66, note ², says the title *Parthicus* was conferred between April and August, 113 A.D. In his description of Trajan's two Parthian campaigns (pp. 65-71), he dates the events of these campaigns in each case one year later than the dates given above; which are taken from Merivale and from Bishop Lightfoot. The latter discusses very fully the whole question of the Chronology of Trajan's reign, "Apostolic Fathers, S. Ignatius," vol. ii, pp. 391-418, ed. 1889.

figure and noble countenance. In stature he exceeded the common height, and on public occasions, when he loved to walk bareheaded in the midst of the senators, his grey hairs gleamed conspicuously above the crowd. His features, as we trace them unmistakably on his innumerable busts and medals, were regular, and his face was the last of the imperial series that retained the true Roman type, not in the aquiline nose only, but in the broad and low forehead, the angular chin, the firm compressed lips, and generally in the stern compactness of its structure. The thick and straight-cut hair, smoothed over the brow without a curl or a parting, marks the simplicity of the man's character in a voluptuous age which delighted in the culture of flowing or frizzled locks. But the most interesting characteristic of the figure I have so vividly before me, is the look of painful thought which seems to indicate a constant sense of overwhelming responsibilities, honourably felt and bravely borne, yet, notwithstanding much assumed cheerfulness and self-abandonment, ever irritating the nerves, and weighing upon the conscience." (Dean Merivale, "History of the Romans under the Empire," chap. lxiii, vol. viii, p. 67, edit. 1865.)

3. Next, as to the deity invoked in the inscription—Jupiter Optumus Maximus Sarapis. The nearest equivalent of this in modern phraseology would perhaps be "the Supreme Being, the beneficent lord of life and death."

By the old Egyptians, Osar-Apis was the name conferred on the dead Apis after he had become "beatified," or re-absorbed after incarnation into Osiris. Memphis, south of the present Cairo, was the chief seat of this cult, as Heliopolis was of that of Mnevis, Thebes of that of Amen, Denderah of that of Isis, Thinis and Philae of that of Osiris, and so on. Each nome and principal city of Egypt was specially devoted to its own favourite presiding divinity, whose attributes were associated (as some think) in each case with what had been the totem animal of the original tribe there settled. These deities were, by no means antagonistic or contradictory to one another; several were professedly the same divinity under different names; many were related as members of a family. They were all regarded, by some at least of the intelligent, from very early ages as so many manifestations of the One eternal principle of life.

Accordingly, after Alexandria had been founded, the Ptolemies, at one and the same time Egyptian Pharaohs and yet Greek Princes, felt the propriety and the need of having a local and presiding deity for that great city. Its population was a congeries gathered not only from Greece and its colonies, but from all the nations and tribes of the Mediterranean and the East. What was wanted was such a tutelary deity as would appeal to the devotion of them all alike, indigenous or foreigner, trader or philosopher, mariner or landsman, rich or poor, sick or whole, learned or unlearned. Tacitus narrates the whole affair of the discovery, and introduction, from over the sea of the great tutelary deity of Alexandria, at some length in his "Histories," book iv, chapters 81 to 84, which is in itself a proof of the influence of this particular cult in his day. The

passage may perhaps be most conveniently read in Merivale's "History of the Romans," chap. lviii, vol. vii, p. 150, or in Church and Broadribb's translation of the "Histories," or in Blackwood's "Ancient Classics for English Readers," Tacitus, chap. viii, pp. 146 to 151. The tale is told by him *à propos* of Vespasian's stay at Alexandria, when he "was already assuming in the eyes of the Romans something of the Divine character, and the Flavian race was beginning to supplant the Julian in their imagination." From the East the Saviour of the world was to appear: who else was he if not the elected of the Eastern legions? At Alexandria, therefore, his followers were eager to invest him with the attributes of deity, and some, at any rate, seem to have been ready to hail him as an incarnation or impersonation of their popular god Sarapis. Then we get the tale of the most successful invention of this divinity by Ptolemy. It was from Sinope, in Pontus on the Euxine, the dark, mysterious land where Medea had erst wrought her alien spells, whence Jason had fetched the Golden Fleece, but on whose strange Cimmerian borders Greek and Oriental had long ago planted their mercantile colonies, that the new revelation came. Tacitus says that the original name of the newcomer from Sinope had not been recorded. The name probably under which he was revered at Sinope and reported of to Ptolemy by travellers and traders, and dreamed of by him afterwards, had a very similar sound to that of Osar-Apis which his ears were familiar with in Egypt; and his functions, too, were easy to reconcile with Egyptian ideas; he was "lord of souls and judge of the dead, and had a consort queen." On hearing his native name the Egyptian priests, persuaded that the mythology of the whole world was but a plagiarism of their own, identified him at once with their own Osar-Apis; and the Greeks as deftly and neatly turned the new-found Osar-Apis into the more euphonious *ὁ Σάραπις*, and saluted him and Isis as Pluto and Persephone. Henceforth Sarapis, "lord of the underworld," is regularly sculptured as Plutus, "lord of riches," as well as god of death. Speedily did Sarapis become the sole lord of his new home. A similar result ensued to that which had often before been witnessed in Egyptian history. As the seat of a god's worship became important so did the deity its patron; the supremacy of one city over other cities meant that its tutelary deity was supreme over other gods. Alexandria became the chief city, the mercantile and official capital of Egypt; then Sarapis became the chief, too, of all the gods of the land, and there his shrines were honoured for nigh one thousand years. For the worship of Sarapis was the last of the heathen forms to fall before the power of Christianity—a thing not to be wondered at in the case of a divinity whose original idea involved the two strongest principles that actuate the conduct of mankind—the love of riches and the fear of death. For the god of the subterranean world was necessarily lord also of its treasures. His devotees had promise not only of the life that now is but also of that which is to come. His worship would appeal alike to faith and hope; to the highest and to the lowest instincts; to the most selfishly superstitious, and to the spiritually-minded with their

highest ideals of possible and future excellence. The late Mr. C. W. King, in the "Gnostics and their Remains," 2nd edit., 1887, p. xvii and pp. 158 to 212, gives much curious information about Sarapis. He tells us that "Speculations as to his true nature employed the ingenuity of the later philosophers at Alexandria, and how in time every conflicting religion strove to claim him as the grand representative of their own doctrine. Macrobius, he says, had preserved one of the most ingenious of these interpretations, i, 20: 'The city of Alexandria pays an almost frantic worship to Sarapis and Isis, nevertheless they show that all this veneration is merely offered to the sun under that name'; and after giving the reasons, proceeds: 'From all this it is evident that the nature of Sarapis and the sun is one and indivisible; and again Isis is universally worshipped as the type of Earth or Nature in subjection to the sun.' The philosopher saw in Sarapis nothing more than the *Anima Mundi*, the spirit of whom Nature universal is the body, so that by an easy transition Sarapis came to be worshipped as the embodiment of the one supreme, whose representative on earth was Christ." The followers of Mithras and Sarapis had a gnosis of their own communicated in their mysteries to the initiated few. The Emperor Hadrian, a most diligent enquirer into things above man's nature, got himself initiated into one mystery after another. All these were of Asiatic origin, and very popular at this time with all persons making any pretension to the title of philosophers. Hadrian writes in a letter from Alexandria to his brother-in-law Servianus in 131 A.D., preserved by the historian Vopiscus in his life of the tyrant Saturninus: "I am now become fully acquainted with that Egypt which you extol so highly. I have found the people vain, fickle, and shifting with every breath of opinion. Those who worship Sarapis are, in fact, Christians; even those who style themselves the bishops of Christ are actually devoted to Sarapis. There is no chief of a Jewish synagogue, no Samaritan, no Christian bishop, who is not an astrologer, a fortune-teller, a conjuror. The very patriarch of Tiberias" (the head of the Jewish religion after the destruction of Jerusalem), "when he comes to Egypt, is compelled by one party to adore Sarapis, by the others to worship Christ. There is but One God for them all, Him do the Jews, Him do the Gentiles, all alike worship." "Consequently," says Mr. King, "those initiated into the true secrets of the old religion must have recognised the fact that their deity, whether the Sun, or the soul of the Universe, was nothing but a type of the one, the Saviour recently revealed to them. Or else it would appear that the new converts, in order to escape persecution, enjoyed their own faith under the covert of the national and local worship, which was susceptible of a spiritual interpretation quite cognate to their own ideas, and indeed enshrouding the same." This may have been true of some few of them.

But Dean Milman ("History of Christianity," vol. ii, p. 108, edit. 1863) quotes this letter of Hadrian's, and says regarding the latter clause in it,—“They have but one God, him do the Christians, Jews, and Gentiles worship alike,”—“Casaubon understood it seriously; but it is evidently

malicious satire. The common god is Gain." The Emperor, in fact, is fiercely sarcastic, not mildly mixing a jumble of creeds together. He writes, not calmly as a philosopher, but at a white heat of fury and indignation. His beloved Antinous had just perished mysteriously in the Nile; and the people of Alexandria were jeering at him in his sorrow with unfeeling ribaldry, and what he says is that there was none of that rabble Jew, Christian, or Gentile who cared for aught but lucre; filthy lucre was the one common god of each and all. Nevertheless, Milman adds that it was no doubt true that "The tone of the higher, the fashionable society in Alexandria was to affect, either on some gnostic or philosophic theory, that all these religions differed only in form, but were essentially the same; that all adored one deity, all one Logos or Demiurge, under different names; all employed the same arts to impose upon the vulgar, and all were equally despicable to the real philosopher."

Whether our vexillary had been initiated or not we do not know. He had at any rate lately been in Egypt, and by linking the name of Sarapis here with that of Jupiter Optumus Maximus would appear to regard him as the great Pantheistic deity, who absorbed the attributes and functions of all the more ancient Gods of Egypt and of Rome, rather than, as in his more limited capacity, the Pluto of their mythology, the lord of the realm of departed spirits: he here addresses himself to the one Supreme Being, Father of Gods and men, the beneficent, almighty lord of life and death.

4. So we pass to the consideration of the vexillary of the 3rd legion, "Cyrenaica," the man who caused this votive tablet to be raised. The vexillaries were the oldest class of veterans—"a *vexillum* was a temporary and extraordinary standard; a *signum*, the fixed and ordinary one. Those veterans who had served out their time of 20 years and were not provided for, though "exauctoritati," yet remained under a vexillum. They were a select troop used only in battle, and were free from all other duties. But *any* troop separated from the main body of the legion under a special commander had its own vexillum, and its members were "vexillarii." They were used for making roads, bridges, fortifications, and as outposts through the provinces. The numbers of a vexillatio, though often a thousand, varied; hence the different rank of the commander over them." (Smith's "Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities," vol. i, p. 792, edition 1890.)

The 3rd legion was in Illyria in 69 A.D., and was one of the earliest in Europe to declare and fight for Vespasian, who had been saluted Emperor in Syria on the 17th July of that year. They took part in the defeat of the Vitellians at Bedriacum under Antonius Priscus, and afterwards marched on to Rome, where Vitellius was slain, 21st December the same year. They were next quartered in Campania, and subsequently received orders to embark for Alexandria: from whence a detachment "vexillatio" of this legion, together with another from the 22nd, was despatched to help Titus—under whom were the 10th, 5th, 15th, and

12th legions—in the siege of Jerusalem. The city was taken August 10th, A.D. 70.

Hence it is just possible that this vexillary, if he had joined the legion as a recruit in Italy when it was ordered to Egypt, had both actually had the fortune to witness the Sarapis incident of Vespasian's at Alexandria as narrated by Tacitus (which occurred there in the spring of 70 A.D.), and had afterwards taken part in the overthrow of Jerusalem under Titus in the August of the same year. If so, he would now be between 60 and 70 years of age when he caused this votive tablet to be cut, in 116-7 A.D., say 65, the same age as his imperial master Trajan himself at this very time. Be that as it may, as a vexillary or veteran, he certainly could not have failed to have heard much in his time of both events from his regimental comrades, some of whom had been present on both occasions.

He was now a vexillary at Jerusalem in 116-7 A.D. Time-expired men of the other legions who had taken part in the great siege were, we know, colonised in Palestine, and had grants of land in various parts of the country. After the fall of the city, the province of Judæa fell under the Emperor's administration, and its tolls and tributes accrued to his private exchequer, and under his superintendence measures were taken for re-peopling the territory with fresh colonists. It is possible that our friend was a vexillarius, who was thus provided for, and may have had such a grant on Mount Zion, where the tablet was found.¹ Or on the other hand, he and other veterans of his vexillatio may have been engaged in fortification and other works there at this time about the old citadel of Zion and city of David, which we know was repaired for a Roman garrison, while the rest of the city was left in ruins. Or again, he may have only been passing through the country with his detachment to Petra (in Arabia), where the legion was shortly afterwards quartered, and this tablet, erected on a favourable site, may merely record his pious wish as a votive thank-offering for the complete success of the enterprise in which he and his were then engaged—the welfare and victory of his imperial master and the Roman people in the overthrow of all hostile powers whatsoever. “Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judæa, in Pontus and Asia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, Jews and Proselytes, Cretes and Arabians.”

As our own regiments bear on their colours the names of the places

¹ It should be remembered that Roman tiles and bricks stamped with the cognisance of the 10th Legion Fretensis have also been found not only by Dr. Bliss recently, but also by former explorers for the Palestine Exploration Fund, on the eastern slopes of Zion (*e.g.*, *Quarterly Statement*, 1885, p. 133, and 1891, p. 20), as well as the inscription of the centurion Julius Sabinus of the same 10th Legion (*Quarterly Statement*, 1871, p. 103); and Dr. Bliss has found that wherever the soil of these southern slopes is disturbed for a few feet deep, tessellated pavements and remains of Roman houses apparently abound.

where they have achieved their most distinguished victories, so in a similar way were honorary titles granted to the Roman legions. The badge or label of the 3rd legion had been *Augusta* (*cp.* "King's Own"); it was now *Cyrenaica*.

The Jewish population of *Cyrenaica* outnumbered the natives, and during the war of Trajan with Parthia, when the Roman legions were probably withdrawn from the African provinces and a few feeble garrisons alone remained to maintain the peace, they were for a time triumphant in the uprising of 116 A.D., and perpetrated the most dreadful atrocities on the Greek inhabitants. "All Egypt, both Alexandria and the Thebais, with Cyrene, arose at once. In Egypt the Jews had at first some success; but the Greeks fell back on Alexandria, mastered the Jews within that city, and murdered the whole race. Maddened by this intelligence the Jews of Cyrene, headed by Luke and Andrew, swept over all lower Egypt, where they were joined by a host of their countrymen, and penetrated into the Thebais, and even further. Horrid tales are told, even by their own people, of the atrocities they committed. Some of their rulers they sawed asunder from head to foot, they flayed their bodies and clothed themselves with the skins, twisted the entrails and wore them as girdles, and anointed themselves with blood. We are even told they boasted of feasting in cannibal wise on the bodies of their enemies; 220,000 fell before their remorseless vengeance. Lupus, the Roman Governor at Alexandria, meanwhile, without sufficient troops, sat an inactive spectator of this desolation." (Milman, "Hist. of the Jews," book xviii, vol. ii, p. 420, edit. 1863.)

Marcus Turbo was sent quickly by sea with a considerable force of horse and foot to the coast of Cyrene. He marched against Andrew, and after much hard fighting, suppressed the insurrection there in that province. The 3rd legion won their decorative epithet, *Cyrenaica*, for the part they then took in these operations.

Luke attempted to force his way by the Isthmus of Suez, and some, at least, of his followers found their way to Palestine. The insurrection was still raging in Egypt when the Jews in Mesopotamia rose in arms. Their insurrection was soon suppressed by the vigour of Lusius Quietus, then considered the ablest soldier in the Roman army, and he was immediately appointed to the Government of Judæa, to provide against any further outbreak there. This detachment of the 3rd legion would be part of his garrison at Jerusalem for the time being.

I have preferred to take the abbreviated form *Vexill.* of the inscription as intended for *Vexillarius*; but doubtless others might consider it more likely to stand for *Vexillatio*, and regard the tablet as erected by the whole detachment. In that case the only difference will be that most, if not all, of the points made above respecting our *Vexillary*, would apply to several instead of only to one of the members of this band.

We saw from the imperial titles that the date of the inscription was probably not earlier than the spring of 115, nor later than the summer of 117 A.D. We seem now, from a consideration of the legion's title,

shut up between the very end of 116 A.D. and the beginning of 117 A.D.

It is just possible that the newly-conferred honorary distinction, "Cyrenaica," was the very cause of the vexillary's tablet. That is to say, if he happened to have been a vexillarius who had left the service, or if he was detached for special duty on Mount Zion, he would have heard at Jerusalem of the success of his former brother legionaries in Africa, of their hard, stern, indomitable fight against tremendous odds, and he hastes in gratitude to share the title since bestowed, and amid the very ruins of Jerusalem to pray the Supreme Being, he and his had adored together at Alexandria in former days, to crown the further labours of their arms in the same cause with victory and success: "So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord," whether in Babylonia, Egypt, or Judæa.

On the other hand, if he belonged to a vexillatio of veterans still in active service, then he may have seen with his own eyes, and wrought with his own hands, some of the dauntless deeds for which he now gives thanks. Lusius Quietus, the Moor, is the Governor of Jerusalem and Judæa, and the 3rd legion, "Cyrenaica," are only halting in the citadel, or on the slopes of Zion, as they pass forward on their march to Petra and "Arabia," where the legion was next quartered.

5. Before we take leave of the veteran "vexillary" offering up his prayer on Zion for his aged Emperor, to "the One Great God, the Judge of quick and dead," when both he and his master were standing, at the end of their several lives, on the near confines of the unseen world, we cannot but recall to mind that an additional pathos is imparted to the scene by the fact that our forefathers believed that in answer to the prayer of another aged man on behalf of the same Emperor, the veil that falls at death between the living and the dead had been uplifted: and that, as an instance that "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much," to Trajan alone, of all the countless myriads of heathendom, it had been vouchsafed to pass forth from Hell, through Purgatory, into Paradise. The story is discussed at length in Bishop Lightfoot's "Apostolic Fathers," ed. 1889, S. Ignatius, vol. i, pp. 3 to 8, and notes.

Gregory, Bishop of Rome, A.D. 587 to 604 A.D. (he who sent forth S. Augustine of Canterbury, the Apostle of the English, and who was in austerity and devotion himself a monk to the end of his days), is said to have been so moved by the representation on Trajan's column of an instance of his clemency and kindness of heart to a poor widow whose son had been slain, that "he betook himself to the tomb of S. Peter, where he wept and prayed earnestly. There, rapt in an ecstasy, he received a revelation to the effect that the soul of Trajan was released from torments in answer to his intercessions; but he was warned never again to presume to pray for those who had died without holy baptism. . . . The noble charity which underlies this story may well exempt it from rigorous criticism. . . . The legend seems to have had a strange fascination for the mediæval mind, both in the East and West. It

appears in a Greek Euchologion, as a notable example of the efficacy of importunate prayer. . . . In the west its reception was still more cordial. . . . S. Thomas of Aquinum discusses it as an anxious and perplexing problem of theology. . . . But the legend received its crowning triumph when it found a home in Dante's poem, and 'the great victory' of Gregory over death and hell was handed down to all time enshrined in his undying verse."

P'alta gloria
Del Roman principato, il cui valore
Mosse Gregorio alla sua gran vittoria :
Io dico di Traiano Imperadore.

And then Dante gives the tale of the widow consoled for the loss of her son at length, "Purgatorio" x, 73-96. And yet again he returns to the theme in "Paradiso" xx, 44-48, saying of the Emperor in bliss (which consists, we must remember, entirely in conformity to the will of God)—

Ora conosce quanto caro costa
Non squir Cristo, per l' esperienza
Di questa dolce vita e dell' oposta.

Our own countryman, Langland (1362 to 1399 A.D.), dwells not so much on the force of prayer as on the goodness of the Emperor as an example to the great of his day. Skeat's "Piers Plowman," ed. 1886, vol. i, pp. 339, 340, and again p. 379.

Misericordia eius super omnia opera eius.

'Ye, baw for bookes!' quath on . was broken out of helle—
'Ich, Troianus, a trewe knyght . ich take witness of a pope,
How ich was ded, and dampned . to dwellen in helle
For an vncristene creature ; . seynt Gregorie wot the sothe,
That al the cristendome vnder Crist . ne myghte cracche me thennes
Bote onliche loue and leaute . as in my lawes demynge !
Gregore wist this wel . and wilnede to my soule
Sauacion, for the sothness . that he seih in myn werkes ;
And for he wilnede wepyng . that ich were saued,
God of hus goodnesse . seih hus grete wil ;
With-oute moo bedes-byddyng . hus bone was vnderfonge,
And ich ysaued, as ye may see . with-oute syngynge of masse.
Loue, withoute leel by-leue . and my lawe ryghtful
Sauede me Sarrasyn . soule and body bothe.'

Lo, lordes ! what Leaute dude . by an emperoure of Rome
That was an vncristene creature.
Nougth thorw preyere of a pope . but for his pure treuthe
Was that Sarasene saued.
Well oughte ye lordes, that lawes kepe . this lessonn to haue in mynde.
And on Troianus treuthe to thinke . and do treuthe to the peple.
'This matir is merke for mani of yow . ac, men of holy cherche,
The Legende Sanctorum yow lereth . more larger than I yow telle ?
Ac thus lele loue . and lyuyng in treuthe
Pulte oute of pyne . a paynim of Rome.

I-blessed be treuthe . that so brak helle-gates,
 And saued the Sarasyn . from Sathanas and his power.
 There no clergie ne couthe . ne kunnynge of lawes.
 Loue and leute . is a lele science ;
 For that is the boke blessed . of blisse and of ioye :
 God wrought it and wrot hit . with his on fynger,
 And toke it Moyses vpon the mount . alle men to lere.

“Lawe with-outen loue,” quod Troianus . “leye there a bene,
 Or any science vnder sonne . the seueue artz and alle,
 But if thei ben lerned for owre lordes loue . loste is alle the tyme” :—
 For no cause to cacche siluer there-by . ne to be called a mayster,
 But al for loue of owre lorde . and the bet to loue the peple.
 For seynte Iohan seyde it . and sothi aren his wordes,
Qui non diligit, manet in morte.”

Lord Bacon, writing (in 1605 A.D.) of the same tale, “Advancement of Learning,” First Book, vii, 5, edit. 1869, W. Aldis Wright, pp. 54, 55, says:—“How much Trajan’s virtue and government was admired and renowned, surely no testimony of grave and faithful history doth more lively set forth than the legende tale of Gregorius Magnus, bishop of Rome, who was noted for the extreme envy he bare towards all heathen excellency; and yet he is reported, out of the love and estimation of Trajan’s moral virtues, to have made unto God passionate and fervent prayers for the delivery of his soul out of hell; and to have obtained it, with a caveat that he should make no more such petitions.”

6. The coincidence between Dr. Bliss’s finding this inscription of 117 A.D. and his later excavations by Siloam is certainly curious. Trajan, who was childless, died either 9th or 11th August, 117 A.D. His empress stated that he had adopted Hadrian just before his death. Hadrian had married Trajan’s grandniece, besides which Hadrian’s father was Trajan’s first cousin. Hadrian was born 24th January, 76 A.D. at Rome. He was left an orphan at 10 years of age under the guardianship of Trajan, who attached him to the army in Germany. He was serving with the 2nd Legion (Vespasian’s old legion in Britain) when he was deputed by them to carry the army’s congratulations to Trajan on his adoption by Nerva in 97 A.D. He served under Trajan in both his Dacian campaigns, and was by his side throughout the Parthian expedition. He was prefect of Syria in 117 A.D. when on 11th August he was saluted Emperor at Antioch. He went to Rome, and in the spring of 118 A.D. led a campaign against the Moesians. In 119 A.D. he began to carry into execution his determination personally to visit every corner of the empire, marching steadily on foot 20 miles a day with the legions, bareheaded, sharing the men’s diet, black bread, cheese, and sour wine. He first passed thus through Germany and Gaul, and Britain, visiting York and Newcastle in the winter of 119–120 A.D., then back again into Gaul and Spain, where the winter of 120–121 A.D. was spent. Then crossed the Mediterranean into Morocco, and marched through the North African provinces into Asia, Parthia, and Syria. In the winter of 122–3 A.D. he was resident at

Athens ; thence he passed to Sicily, and saw the sunrise from the top of Aetna. He was at Rome in 124 A.D., from thence crossed to Carthage, and returned to Rome, and in 125 A.D. to Athens again. There he built a new Athens, south-east of the Acropolis, and completed the great Temple of Jupiter Olympius. In 130 A.D. he visited Egypt, and went up the Nile to Thebes, and back to Alexandria, where he reconstructed a whole quarter of the city. The next year, 131 A.D., occurred that final outbreak of the Jews in Judæa under the gallant warrior, and last of the national heroes, Bar-kokheba, "son of a star," so called from Balaam's prophecy in Numbers xxiv, 17 : "There shall come forth a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel and shall smite through the corners of Moab, and break down all the sons of tumult, and Israel shall do valiantly ; out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion, and shall destroy him that remaineth of the city." After putting down the insurgents in Egypt, Syria, and Palestine, he established in 132 A.D. the Roman colony of Aelia Capitolina at Jerusalem, so called after himself, Aelius Hadrianus, and on account of the immense and even then still impressive towering heights of the Herodean "Capitol," or present Haram area. Hadrian himself, however, did not come to Jerusalem till 134 A.D., when he was personally occupied for a considerable time in its rebuilding. He was a great architect himself, and travelled with a company of architects and artificers, and was officially entitled the "Restorer" of no less than 13 cities. It would be very strange if we did not find substantial traces of his work at Jerusalem, and probably much of what Dr. Bliss has been unearthing by Siloam belongs to this period. The great dam across the valley below the old pool (*Quarterly Statement*, 1895, pp. 305-312) resembles in character the construction at Birket Isrâil ("Jerusalem" volume of the Survey, p. 10), where the great fosse appears to have been similarly dammed by him. The ample supplies of water in the reservoirs beneath the Temple area would no longer be required for cleansing purposes after the Jewish sacrifices had ceased, and would be available for baths, &c., the remains of which have there been found by Dr. Bliss. His triumphal arch across the street, the so-called "Ecce-Homo" arch, still exists. The inscription to his successor, Antoninus Pius, given in the *Quarterly Statement*, 1874, p. 209, and with slight differences in the "Jerusalem" volume of the Survey, p. 427, as IMP. CAES. TITO AELIO HADRIANO ANTONINO AUG. PIO P. P. PONTIFICI AVGVRI DECRETO DECVRIONVM, is said to be still legible, on a large stone built upside down into the south wall of the Haram just east of the Double Gate, and is supposed by M. Clermont-Ganneau to be the base of the statue erected to the Emperor Hadrian within the area where he built his temple to Jupiter. The inscription must anyhow belong to a date subsequent to 138 A.D. after the adoption of Antoninus. Hadrian died 10th July, 138 A.D., in the sixty-second year of his age, and twenty-second of his reign. The Bordeaux pilgrim in 333 A.D. saw the statue still standing. Other works executed by Hadrian at Jerusalem are described in the "Jerusalem" volume of the Survey, pp. 9 to 11.

Dr. Bliss is to be sincerely congratulated on the several Roman and Byzantine works he has thus been the means of bringing to light. Besides the fragments of Eudocia's wall (461 A.D.) along the southern slopes of Sion, the mosaic pavements both on Mount Sion and on Olivet, the Roman baths by Siloam, the Roman Camp at el Lejjun across the Jordan, and this interesting inscription at Neby Daúd, we have now to thank him further for the Roman works he has discovered on the eastern slopes of Mount Sion, as published in the *Quarterly Statement* for January last. The remains there coloured in red on the diagram opposite to p. 9 are nearly all Roman. The basis of the thick-walled square tower by the aqueduct and the aqueduct itself are undoubtedly so; and probably the "lower wall," with similar chambers, the entrance to which is from above only, as if they had been constructed for storehouses of some kind, is Roman also. Over the top of these Eudocia's wall, of later construction still, is shown as running. May he before next spring have the good fortune to discover for the Fund many other similar remains; he has already achieved as much within two years for Roman remains at Jerusalem as perhaps any previous explorer in the same short period of time ever did or could.

II.—By EBENEZER DAVIS.

Amongst the discoveries announced in the issues of the *Quarterly Statement* for the year 1895 as having been made by the officers of the Fund at Jerusalem, a prominent place must be given to the inscription found by Dr. Bliss in the wall of Neby Daúd.

I have looked through each *Statement* that has appeared since Dr. Bliss's discovery, but not having seen any adequate account of this important epigraph, I venture to present a few facts which may be useful for its fuller elucidation.

It is a votive inscription set up by a vexillarius or standard-bearer of the 3rd legion, *not* to Olympian Jove, but to Jupiter Sarapis, a Romano-Egyptian divinity, the object of the act of devotion being the health or safety and victory of the Emperor Trajan and the Roman people.

Strictly speaking, this divinity was foreign to the Pantheon both of Egypt and Rome, his statue having been brought from Sinope to Alexandria by Ptolemy Soter (B.C. 312-283), the first of the Lagidæ or Greek kings of Egypt. The name, however, had been given at a much earlier period to one of the old Egyptian deities, probably Apis, worshipped with the attributes of Osiris.

The introduction of the worship of the later Serapis into Egypt was viewed with great disfavour by the natives, who were votaries of the ancient gods of their country, and so intolerant were they of the strange cult that, as Macrobius informs us, the erection of Serapea, or temples of Serapis, was forbidden within the walls of the old cities of Egypt. We have it also on the authority of Strabo, the famous geographer, that the

great temple of Serapis at Memphis was outside the city, this statement of the learned Greek being confirmed by recent discovery.¹

Some interesting particulars relating to this matter are given by Tacitus, who lived in the reign of Trajan.² This writer in his *Histories*, iv, 81, informs us that "while Vespasian staid at Alexandria (A.D. 70) awaiting the summer winds (which blow from May 27th to September 14th) and a calm sea, many wonders occurred by which the favour of Heaven and a certain goodwill of the Deities towards Vespasian were evidently signified. A poor blind man of Alexandria, known through the whole town by reason of his infirmity (warned by the God Serapis, whom that superstitious nation adores above others), fell down at Vespasian's feet and begged of him with tears to heal his blindness by wetting his cheeks and his eyelids round about with the spittle of his mouth. Another, lame of an hand, by the command of the same God, prayed Vespasian to vouchsafe that the limb might feel the imprint of a Cæsar's foot.³ Vespasian at first scorned and rejected their suits, but when they still pressed upon him he was in a doubt what to do, fearing, on the one hand, the disreputation of vanity, while on the other, the importunity of the diseased persons, and the speeches of flatterers gave him some cause of hope; at last, he desired the physicians to consult whether such blindness and infirmity were possible to be cured by human help. The physicians (as their manner is) diversely disputed the point, but at last concluded—that the blind man's eyes were not perished but overgrown with some

¹ Referring to M. Mariette's uncovering in 1851 of the Serapeum at Sakkarah. No burials took place within any city of the living in Egypt. The sacred bulls were deposited after death from apparently the time of the Second Dynasty, 3,000 years B.C., down to the days of the Ptolemies, in their own series of vaults. The funeral of a bull, with full rites, cost about £20,000. These vaults, like those of all other sacred animals or human beings, were always outside and away from the cities of the living.—J. N. D.

² Trajan was born towards the end of 53 A.D., in the reign of Nero. Tacitus, who would be living when this inscription was cut, was born in 55 A.D. He began life under the patronage of Vespasian (who died June 23rd, 79 A.D., aged 70), and that of his two sons, Titus and Domitian. Titus was born December 30th, 41 A.D., and died September 13th, 81 A.D., having been Emperor two years and two months. His brother Domitian was killed September 18th, 96 A.D. Tacitus's *Histories*, as we now have them, end with the death of Domitian, but he had designed to add the reigns of Nerva and Trajan. Under Trajan all the works known positively to be his were composed. Whether he survived that Emperor we do not know. He tells us himself that he had reserved a work on the affairs of Trajan for the solace of his old age, which possibly he never attained. Juvenal too, we may remember, was born in 59 A.D. and died in 119 A.D.—J. N. D.

³ The foot was one of the sacred emblems of Sarapis, being regarded as significant of Death as Departure, or as Crusher out of life. The test was, therefore, a crucial one. If the Emperor's foot was possessed with divine power when placed upon the cripple kneeling before him, it would be a proof that they were right in hailing him as Sarapis incarnate.—J. N. D.

film or skin, which being taken away the sight would return; and that the other man's limbs had gone awry or were dislocated, and might, with force conveniently applied, be set right again; that perhaps it was the pleasure of the gods to restore them to health, and to appoint the Prince as the divine means of doing it. Finally, that if the remedy had good success the glory would redound to the Prince that did it; if not, the shame would light upon the poor patients that importuned him. Whereupon Vespasian, determined to put all things to the touch of his fortune and thinking that nothing was incredible, with a pleasant countenance, before a great multitude who stood by attending the events, did as they had desired him, and immediately the blind man recovered sight and the cripple the use of his hand. They who were present affirm both to be true, even at this time when nothing is to be got by lying."

The great Roman appears to have suspected a deal of fraud and humbug in the whole affair, and doubtless he was right.¹

The historian goes on to relate (Chapter 82) how the Emperor, his interest in Serapis having been excited, was "desirous to visit the sacred seat of the God and ask some questions relating to the Imperium, so after commanding all to depart, he entered into the temple alone, where, busied at his devotion, he thought he saw behind his back Basilides, a nobleman of Egypt, whom at the same time he knew to be sick in his bed many days' journey from Alexandria. Then he enquired of the priests whether Basilides had that day come into the temple and of others whether he had been seen in the city; and at last, sending horsemen on purpose, he found Basilides was no less than fourscore miles distant at that same moment. Upon which he concluded it was a divine vision and out of the name of Basilides derived an answer by the God to his question," *i.e.*, that he was recognised by the God as Basileus or Emperor. He had been saluted as Imperator at Cæsarea, July 17th, 69, but his rival Vitellius was not slain till December 21st, and the Senate had then confirmed the title. Vespasian, ever slow and cautious and now in his 60th year, had purposely delayed going to Rome, where his son, Domitian, was acting as Cæsar and Prætor for him. On January 1st, 70, Vespasian and Titus were elected Consuls, and Domitian Prætor. It was not till late in the summer of 70 A.D., that Vespasian arrived in Rome.

Tacitus proceeds (Histories, iv, 83):—"The original of this God has not

¹ "Voltaire joyfully proclaimed the authenticity of this miracle; Hume applauds the cautious and penetrating genius of the historian; Paley dissects the particulars of the narrative and points out a flaw in it." "It is not by any means easy to discover what were the religious feelings of Tacitus: at times he appears to have been a fatalist, at times an orthodox believer in the religion of the State: in the above narrative he has evidently no doubt as to the truth of the cure, if not of the miracle wrought by the Emperor."—DONNE. A very striking passage from Champigny "Rome et la Judée," p. 499, on the parallelism between Vespasian and Christ is quoted by Merivale, "Hist. of Romans," vol. viii, chap. lxxv, p. 135, ed. 1865.—J. N. D.

been recorded by any of our writers, but the Egyptian priests relate the story after this manner : that Ptolemy, the first of the Macedonians, who obtained the kingdom of Egypt, when he added walls to the newly built city of Alexandria, also erected temples and instituted religion, saw in his sleep a goodly young man, much taller than ordinary, who warned him to send into Pontus some friends whom he could confide in, to bring his image from thence, that it would bring prosperity to the whole kingdom, but particularly to the place where the image should be set up ; and the young man seemed to be immediately carried up to heaven in a flame of fire. Ptolemy being moved with so great a miracle, declared his vision to the priests of Egypt, whose business it was to interpret such things. But when he found them ignorant of Pontus, and other foreign matters, he asked Timotheus, an Athenian of the family of the Eumolpidæ (whom he had brought from Eleusis to have the chief government in matters of religion), what devotion or God that might be. Timotheus, conferring with some who had been in Pontus, understood there was a city called Sinope, and near it an ancient temple dedicated to Jupiter Dis or Pluto, for there stood by it the image of a woman commonly called Proserpine. But Ptolemy, prone to fear as kings commonly are, and quickly returning to his former security, and being more addicted to pleasure than devotion, neglected for a while the matter and turned his thoughts another way, till such time as the same vision appeared again in a more terrible manner, peremptorily denouncing destruction both to him and his kingdom, in case what he had required was not performed. Then Ptolemy sent an embassy with presents to Scydrothemis, King of Sinope, desiring them to go by Delphos, and ask counsel of the Pythian Apollo. Their voyage by sea was prosperous, and the answer of Apollo was without ambiguity, namely, that they should go forward and bring his father's image along with them, but leave his sister's behind.

“84. The ambassadors came to Sinope, where, presenting their gifts, they opened their commission and declared what the king their master's request was. Scydrothemis was in doubt what to do, sometimes he was afraid of the displeasure of the God, sometimes the threats of his subjects, who were utterly averse to it, and sometimes he was inclined by the presents and promises of the ambassadors. And notwithstanding three years were spent in this negotiation, yet Ptolemy continued all the time an earnest and diligent suitor, and sent more honourable ambassadors one after another, together with more ships and gold.

“ At last a terrible and threatening vision appeared to Scydrothemis, commanding him to prevent the determination of the Gods no longer ; but as he still delayed, various mischiefs and divers diasters befel him, and the manifest wrath of the Gods vexed him daily more and more ; so that calling an assembly of all the people, he declared to them the commands of the God, his own and Ptolemy's visions, and the impending mischiefs in case of refusal. But, however, they refused the motion, and fearing their own state, and envying Egypt, they beset the temple about.

“ Whereupon there runs a strong report that the God himself went

aboard the ships of his own accord after they had been brought to shore, and which is wonderful, that they arrived at Alexandria in three days, though they sailed through so long and vast a sea; and so there was built a temple to the God agreeable to the magnificence of the city, in a place called Rhacotis, where an ancient temple had been dedicated to Serapis and Isis. This is the most famous opinion concerning the origin and transportation of this God." (Histories, iv, 83, 84.)¹

Tacitus likewise informs us that Serapis was regarded by many as the sovereign ruler of all, by others as Osiris, the most ancient deity of that people, by most as Jupiter Dis, lord of the under world, and that he was also worshipped by many as Esculapius, or the god of healing. Sick persons were accustomed to pass a night in the Serapeum in order to effect their restoration to health.

Hence prayers might appropriately be offered to him by the Roman legionary PRO SALVTE IMPERATORIS ET POPVLI ROMANI.

Serapis was also adored as Pluto, lord of the under world, Hades personified. (Aidoneus.)

The Romans appear latterly to have become much addicted to the worship of Serapis, Mithras, and other foreign idols, as may be plainly seen by votive inscriptions to them, profusely given in "Grüter," and other more modern works on classical epigraphy.

Altars had been dedicated to private Romans to the Egyptian deities previous to B.C. 58, in which year the Roman Senate decreed the abolition of the worship of the gods of Egypt, and the demolition of their temples.

This decree, however, was ineffectual in hindering the spread of the Græco-Egyptian worship, to which the Roman commonalty had become addicted, nor was a second *Senatus Consultum*, issued in B.C. 50, more preventive of the strange religion. We have it on the authority of Dion Cassius that the will of the people had so far prevailed by B.C. 43 that the Senate allowed the erection in the Circus Flaminius of a new temple to Serapis and Isis, from which time onward these divinities were worshipped without let or hindrance. Their votaries were very numerous in the time of Hadrian, and Alexander Severus magnificently adorned their temple. The worship of Jupiter Serapis was abolished at Alexandria in the reign of Justinian.

Though the importance of Dr. Bliss's discovery is greatest from the point of view of classical archæology, I desire nevertheless to point out to the devout inquirer that the study of the native and foreign cults of the Roman Empire at the time when this inscription was set up will forcefully illustrate the divine power of Christianity which brought so many nations out of the darkness of Pagan superstition, with its "Lords many and Gods many," into the light of that pure and simple faith,

¹ This translation of Tacitus is taken from that made by Sir Henry Savile and others, published in three volumes, 8vo, London, 1698. The above extracts are from vol. iii, pp. 347-350.

which acknowledges but "One God, the Father, and One Lord, Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. viii, 5, 6).

The text of the inscription was accurately given in ordinary Roman capitals on p. 130 of the *Quarterly Statement*, April, 1895, excepting that the name of the emperor is spelt TRAJINI—on the stone it is TRAIANI.

SOUTHAMPTON, *October 21st*, 1895.

A SHORT DESCRIPTION OF SOME BIBLE COINS FOUND IN PALESTINE.

By the Rev. THEODORE E. DOWLING.

I. THE SHEKEL, שֶׁקֶל, corresponding to the word *weight*.

THERE is no distinct allusion to the five silver shekels of Simon Maccabæus (B.C. 141-136) in the New Testament. "The thirty pieces of silver" (St. Matthew xxvi, 15, and xxvii, 3, 5, 6, 9), for which our LORD was betrayed, considered with the parallel passage of Zechariah (xi, 12, 13), suggest this probable reading "thirty *shekels* of silver"—not actual shekels, but Syrian tetradrachms, of the same weight. The Revised Version of the New Testament renders the passage "they weighed unto him thirty pieces of silver." To this day it is usual in Jerusalem to examine and test carefully all coins received. Thus a Medjidie (silver) is not only examined by the eye, but also by noticing its ring on the stone pavement, and English sterling gold is carefully weighed, and returned when defaced. The mention of the weighing of the silver may indicate a similar state of things, as regards currency, in our LORD'S time.

The first distinct allusion to the earliest native Jewish coinage is found in the Apocrypha. There are frequent references to the shekel in the Old Testament, but only as a certain weight of silver, not as a stamped coin.

Antiochus VII (Euergetes, Sidetes), famous for his siege and capture of Jerusalem, B.C. 133, "gave" Simon Maccabæus, the brother of the celebrated Judas, "priest and prince of the Jews," "leave to coin money for thy country with thine own stamp" (1 Maccabees xv, 6) in November, B.C. 139.

"The Shekel of the Sanctuary," or "Holy Shekel" was probably the normal weight, and preserved in the Temple.

Its value was about two shillings and eightpence of English money. The average shekel, found in Judæa, weighs between 200 and 220 grains, troy weight. The silver shekel and half-shekel were struck on the Phœnician standard.