

THE

**MOABITE STONE;**

A FAC-SIMILE OF THE ORIGINAL INSCRIPTION,

WITH

AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION,

AND

A HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL COMMENTARY.

*Second Edition, Revised and Enlarged,*

WITH A MAP OF THE LAND OF MOAB.

BY

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MDCCCLXXI.



## P R E F A C E .

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As the First Edition of my Essay on the Moabite Stone was circulated gratuitously by the Proprietors among the Members of the British Association, and as there has been a demand for purchasing it, I have been induced to issue a Second Edition, which should be accessible to the Public. Had I studied my own feelings, I should have deferred the publication of the Second Edition a little longer, to see whether M. Ganneau could at last be induced to publish Photographs, or Casts of the squeeze of the entire Stone, and of the fragments after it was broken up, which he possesses, so as to enable us to test his joining together of the shattered pieces. But the withdrawal of my Essay from the market led many to believe that it was either owing to some literary blunders which had escaped my notice, or that I had changed my mind on the genuineness of the Stone. The first whisper I can safely pass over without explanation. As to the second I can only remark, that the scholarship of the individual who should call the genuineness of the Inscription in question is not worth a day's purchase.

In preparing the Second Edition for the Press I carefully perused both the important and the unimportant Treatises and Notices which have appeared separately, and in Periodicals, upon the Moabite Stone, as may be seen from almost every line of the commentary.

Through the aid of the Council of the British Association, and the recent exploration of Moab in connection with *the Palestine Exploration Society*, I am enabled to publish in this edition a new Map of Moab, embodying the investigations of Captain Warren and Mr. Palmer, which will materially aid the understanding of the campaign described on the Stone.

As I greatly desire that my Treatise should be intelligible to every ordinary reader of the Scriptures, I have tried to explain the very rudiments of Hebrew grammar, and have translated nearly every foreign quotation, whether Oriental or Occidental. This, I am sure, the more advanced student will excuse; since it is as important for educated people generally, who often wonder what dialects the neighbouring people of the Jews spoke, as it is for the scholar, to know in what language Solomon, Omri, Jehoshaphat and Elisha, who are described as holding converse with the different nations of Canaan, carried on their conversation.

Appended to this Treatise will be found the eleven versions of the Moabite Stone, English, French, and German, which have already appeared, in parallel columns, accompanied by my own translation. In arranging these versions I have not followed the chronological order, but grouped them together according to the different languages, giving, however, the French the priority, because they appeared first. As M. Ganneau and Professor Schlottmann have respectively published three different recensions of their translation, I have given the last of each.

In the Index of the words which occur in the Moabite Stone, I have not only catalogued the roots, but the different forms of the verbs, the nouns and the particles, so that it may constitute a Concordance to the Inscription. Any form of a verb or a noun used in the Moabite Stone, which does not occur in the Hebrew Scriptures, is marked by an asterisk, thus enabling the student to see at a glance what new acquisitions this lapidary document yields to the Hebrew vocabulary. The Grammars referred to are the last editions.

HOLMLEA, BINFIELD, BRACKNELL, BERKS,

*May 1st, 1871.*



TO

EMANUEL DEUTSCH,

I INSCRIBE THIS TREATISE

AS A

TOKEN OF ESTEEM.

1 אָנֹךְ . מִשַּׁע . בֶּן . כְּמִשְׁנֵד . מֶלֶךְ . מֵאֵב . הָרִד  
 2 יִבְנִי אָבִי . מֶלֶךְ . עַל . מֵאֵב . שְׁלֹשֶׁן . שֵׁת . וְאָנֹךְ . מֶלֶךְ  
 3 תִּי . אַחֵר . אָבִי . וְאַעֲשֶׂה . הַבִּמָּת . זֹאת . לְכַמֵּשׁ . בְּקִרְחָהּ בְּמִתְּ  
 4 [מ] שַׁע . כִּי . הִשְׁעֵנִי . מִכָּל . הַשְּׁלֹכֵן . וְכִי . הִרְאֵנִי . בְּכָל . שְׁנָאִי . עִם  
 5 [רִי] . מֶלֶךְ . יִשְׂרָאֵל . וַיַּעֲנֵנִי . אֵת . מֵאֵב . יָמֵן . רֶבֶן . כִּי . תִּחַנֶּנּוּ . כְּמִשׁ . בְּאֹרֶן  
 6 צֶה וַיִּהְלֹפָה . בְּנָה . וַיֹּאמֶר . גַּם . הָאֵל . אֲעֲנֵנִי . אֵת . מֵאֵב . בְּיָמֵי . אָמֵר . [נִצָּא]  
 7 וְאִרְאֶה . בָּהּ . וּבְבִתָּהּ . וַיִּשְׂרָאֵל . אֲבִד . אֲבִד . עֵלָם . וַיִּישַׁע . עֲמָרִי . אֵת . אֶרֶץ  
 8 מִן . מֶה . רָבָא . וַיֵּשֶׁב . בָּהּ (הַשְּׁנָא בְּיָמָהּ וּבְיָמֵי בְנָהּ . אֶרְבָּעַן . שֵׁת וַיִּרְצִין)  
 9 בָּהּ . כְּמִשׁ . בְּיָמֵי . וְאִבְנִי . אֵת . בַּעַל . מַעֲנִן . וְאַעֲשֶׂה . בָּהּ . הָאֲשֻׁחִים . וְאִבְנִי  
 10 אֵת . קִרְיָתָן . וְאִשׁ . גֵּר . יֹשֵׁב . בְּאֶרֶץ . [עֲטָרָת] . מַעֲלָם . וַיִּבֶן . לָהּ . מֶלֶךְ . יִ  
 11 שְׂרָאֵל . אֵת . עֲטָרָתָהּ . וְאַלְתָּחַם . בָּקָר . וְאַחֲזָהּ . וְאַחֲרָג . אֵת . כָּל . גְּבֻרִין  
 12 הָקָר . רִית . לְכַמֵּשׁ . וְלִמְאֵב . וְאַשְׁבֵּי . מִשָּׁם . אֵת . [כָּל הַשְּׁלָל] וְאִסָּק  
 13 חֵב . הָ . לִפְנֵי . כְּמִשׁ . בְּקִרְיָתָהּ . וְאַשְׁבֵּי . בָּהּ . אֵת . אִשׁ . שָׁרָן . וְאֵת . אִשׁ  
 14 מִחֶרֶת . וַיֹּאמֶר . לִי . כְּמִשׁ . לָךְ . אֲחֹז . אֵת . גְּבָהּ . עַל . יִשְׂרָאֵל . וְ[וָא]  
 15 הֶלֶךְ . בַּלְלָהּ . וְאַלְתָּחַם . בָּהּ . מִרְקָע . הַשְּׁחִירָתָהּ . עַד . צִהָרִים . וְאִ  
 16 חֲזָה . וְאַחֲרָג . כָּלָהּ . שִׁבְעַת . אֲלָפִין . [אִשׁ] . רַק . לֹא . הִרְגִּיתִי . גְּבִיר  
 17 ת . [וּרְחִמְתִּי] . כִּי . לַעֲשֹׂתָהּ . כְּמִשׁ . חֲחִרְמִיתִי [הֵם] וְאִקָּח . מִשָּׁם . [כִּי]  
 18 לִי . יְהוָה . וְאַסְחָב . הֵם . לִפְנֵי . כְּמִשׁ . וּמֶלֶךְ . יִשְׂרָאֵל . בְּנָהּ . אֵת  
 19 יֹחֵץ . וַיֵּשֶׁב . בָּהּ . בְּהִלְתָּחֲמָהּ . כִּי . וַיִּגְרָשָׁהּ . כְּמִשׁ . מִפְּנֵי . [וְ]  
 20 אִקָּח . מִמֵּאֵב . מֵאֲתָן . אִשׁ . כָּל . רִשָּׁה . וְאַשָּׁאָה . בִּיהֶץ . וְאַחֲזָהּ  
 21 לְסַפֵּת . עַל . דִּיבִן . אָנֹךְ . בְּנִתִי . קִרְחָהּ . חֲמַת . הַיַּעֲרֹן . [וְחִמְרָתָהּ]  
 22 הָעֶפֶל . וְאָנֹךְ . בְּנִתִי . שַׁעֲרִיָּה . וְאָנֹךְ . בְּנִתִי . מִגְדֻלְתָּהּ . וְאִ  
 23 נֹךְ . בְּנִתִי בֵּית . מֶלֶךְ . וְאָנֹךְ . עֲשִׂיתִי . כְּלָאִי . הָאֲשֻׁמִּין . בְּקִרְבִּי  
 24 הָקָר . וְבִר . אֵן . בְּקִרְבִּי . הָקָר . בְּקִרְחָהּ . וְאָמֵר . לְכָל . הָעָם . עֲשׂוּ . לִי  
 25 כֶּם . אִשׁ . בֵּר . בְּבִיתָהּ . וְאָנֹךְ . בְּרִיתִי . הַמִּכְרֶתֶת . לְקִרְחָהּ . בְּאִשׁ . בְּחֵרִי  
 26 יִשְׂרָאֵל . אָנֹךְ . בְּנִתִי . [עֲרֵעֵר] . וְאָנֹךְ . עֲשִׂיתִי . הַמִּסְלֵל . בְּאֶרֶן  
 27 [וְאָנֹךְ] . בְּנִתִי בֵּית . בִּמָּת . כִּי . הָרִם . הָאֵל . אָנֹךְ . בְּנִתִי . בָּצָר . כִּי . עֲצָדָהּ [הָא]  
 28 [מֵאִשׁ] . דִּיבִן . חֲמִשָּׁן . כִּי . כָּל . דִּיבִן . מִשְׁמַעַת . וְאָנֹךְ . מְלֻכְתִּי  
 29 מֵאֵת . בְּקִרְנִי . אֲשֶׁר . יִסְפְּתִי . עַל . הָאֶרֶץ . וְאָנֹךְ . בְּנִתִי  
 30 [בֵּית] . גְּמֻלָּהּ . וְבֵית . דְּבִלְתָּן . וְבֵית . בַּעַל . מַעֲנִן . וְאַשָּׁאָה . שָׁם . אֵת . מִסְכְּנִי  
 31 [עִם] . הָאֶרֶץ . וְחֹרֶן . יֹשֵׁב . בָּהּ . ב . ו

32 [וַיֹּאמֶר לִי] . כְּמִשׁ . רִד . הִלְתָּחַם . בְּחֹרֶן . וְאַחֲזָהּ . וְאַלְתָּחַם בָּהּ

33 [וְאַחֲזָהּ וַיֵּשֶׁב] . הָאֵל . כְּמִשׁ . בְּיָמֵי . וְעַל [כִּי] עָשָׂה [תִּי]

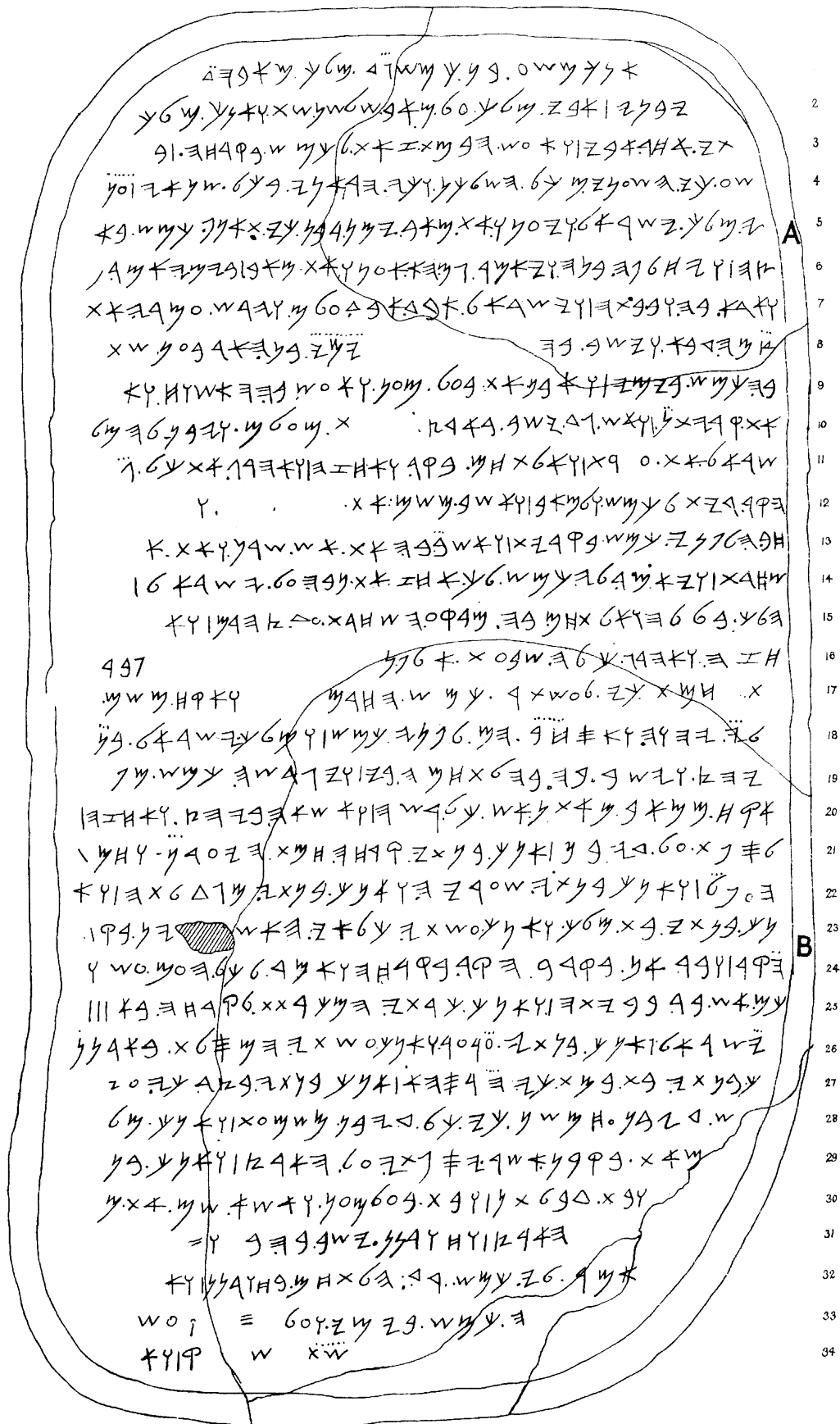
שֵׁת שֵׁן וְאִ

1 I Mesha am son of Chemoshgad King of Moab, the  
2 Dibonite. My father reigned over Moab thirty years, and I reign-  
3 ed after my father. And I erected this Stone to Chemosh at Korchah, [a Stone of]  
4 [sa]lvation, for he saved me from all despoilers and let me see my desire upon all my enemies.  
5 Now Om[r]i, King of Israel, he oppressed Moab many days, for Chemosh was angry with his  
6 l[a]nd. His son succeeded him, and he also said, I will oppress Moab. In my days he said, [Let us go]  
7 and I will see my desire on him and his house, and Israel said, I shall destroy it for ever. Now Omri took the land  
8 Medeba and [the enemy] occupied it [in his days and in] the days of his son, forty years. And Chemosh [had mercy]  
9 on it in my days; and I built Baal Meon, and made therein the ditch and I [built]  
10 Kirjathaim. For the men of Gad dwelled in the land [Atar]oth from of old, and the K[ing of I]srael fortified  
11 A[t]aroth, and I assaulted the wall and captured it, and killed all the wa[rriors of]  
12 the wall, for the well-pleasing of Chemosh and Moab; and I removed from it all the spoil, and [of-  
13 fered] it before Chemosh in Kirjath; and I placed therein the men of Siran and the me[n of]  
14 Mochrath. And Chemosh said to me, Go take Nebo against Israel. [And I]  
15 went in the night, and I fought against it from the break of dawn till noon, and I took  
16 it, and slew in all seven thousand [men, but I did not kill] the wom-  
17 en [and ma]idens, for [I] devoted [them] to Ashtar-Chemosh; and I took from it  
18 [the ves]sels of Jehovah and offered them before Chemosh. And the King of Israel fortif[ie]d  
19 Jahaz, and occupied it, when he made war against me; and Chemosh drove him out before [me and]  
20 I took from Moab two hundred men, all its poor, and placed them in Jahaz, and took it,  
21 to annex it to Dibon. I built Korchah, the wall of the forest, and the wall  
22 of the city, and I built the gates thereof, and I built the towers thereof, and I  
23 built the palace, and I made the prisons for the crim[inal]s with[in the]  
24 wall. And there was no cistern in the wall in Korchah, and I said to all the people, Make for yourselves  
25 every man a cistern in his house. And I dug the ditch for Korchah with the [chosen] men of  
26 [I]srael. I built Aroer and I made the road across the Arnon,  
27 I built Beth-Bamoth, for it was destroyed; I built Bezer, for it was cu[t down]  
28 by the armed m[en] of Dibon, for all Dibon was now loyal; and I reign[ed]  
29 from Bikran, which I added to my land, and I bui[lt]  
30 [Beth-Gamul], and Beth-Diblathaim, and Beth-Baal-Meon, and I placed there the p[oor]  
31 [people of] the land. And as to Horonaim [the men of Edom] dwelt therein [on the descent from of old].  
32 And Chemosh said to me, Go down, make war against Horonaim, and ta[ke it]. And I assaulted it,  
33 [And I took it for] Chemosh [restored i]t in my days. Wherefore I ma[de] . . . .

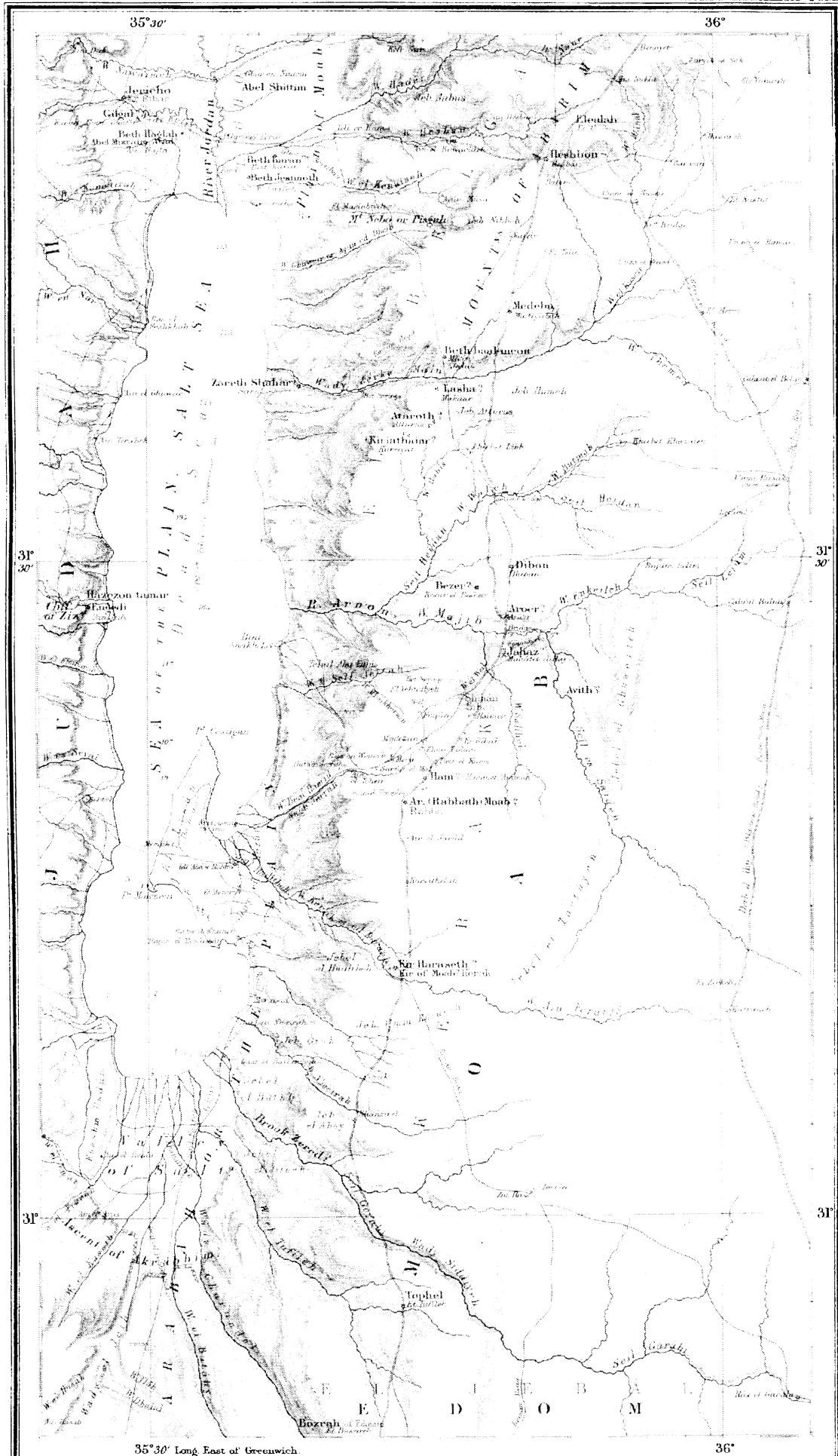
34 year . . . and I . . . .

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THE MOABITE STONE,  
REDUCED TO ONE-FIFTH OF THE ORIGINAL.



# INTRODUCTION.

## I.—THE HISTORY OF THE MOABITE STONE.

THE story of the discovery of this unparalleled relic is as simple, as the means set on foot to obtain it, which resulted in its destruction, are intricate. The Rev. F. Klein, of the Church Missionary Society, made a journey to Jebel Ajloon and the Bekka, in August 1868, over a country which has only been visited twice or thrice by Europeans during this century. On his arrival at Dibân, August 19th, he was informed by his friend and protector, Sheikh Zattam, son of the famous Fendi-l-Fäiz, Sheikh of the Beni Sachr, that scarcely ten minutes from where they had pitched their tents, there was a black basalt stone, which turned out to be about 3 ft. 10 in. high, 2 ft. in breadth, and 14½ in. in thickness, and rounded both at the top and bottom to nearly a semicircle,<sup>1</sup> with an inscription on it consisting of thirty-four straight lines, running across the stone, about 1¼ inch apart.

Mr. Klein, who is in fact the real discoverer of the Moabite Stone, did not understand the import or the immense importance of the precious document, and therefore satisfied himself with merely taking a drawing of a few words and compiling an alphabet from it. Still, from the whole appearance of the monument, he was impressed with the fact that it ought to be in an European Museum, and accordingly, at once set negotiations on foot to secure it for the Museum at Berlin. Dr. Petermann, of Berlin, to whom Mr. Klein described his find, endeavoured to get possession of it, and then transmit this huge and heavy block to his Government.

But though the Stone had stood there upwards of two millenniums and a half without the natives assigning any other value to it than that of a relic, the very fact that a Frank, as they call every European, had seen it and was endeavouring to obtain it, at once roused their suspicions, and made the Moabites believe that it was worth, or that they at least ought to ask for it, its weight in gold. Hence those of them who had an interest in getting as much for the Stone as possible, were not satisfied with having one bidder for it; and, knowing that there were in Jerusalem other Europeans, who at a great expense not only compass sea and land, but even descend into the very bowels of the earth to obtain stones, bones, broken earthenware, &c., provided they are old, determined to make known their treasure to other Franks with plenty of money. Thus, a few weeks after Mr. Klein had seen the Stone, and spoken to the natives about it, a man from Kerak came purposely to acquaint Captain Warren, the indefatigable and accomplished agent of the Palestine Exploration Society at Jerusalem, with its existence.

The design of this information need not be pointed out; and we, as good men of business, can hardly

<sup>1</sup> As M. Ganneau, who never saw the Stone in its entirety, has given it out that it was square at the bottom, and as this serious mistake has been followed by all who have written upon, or who have given sketches of, the Moabite Stone, we subjoin Mr. Klein's description, who, as we shall see hereafter, was not only the original discoverer of this remarkable monument, but is the only European who saw it before it was broken. "The Stone is, as appears from the accompanying sketch, rounded on *both* sides, not only at the upper end, as mentioned by Monsieur Ganneau, who says '*La forme de la stèle était celle d'un carré long, terminé en haut par une partie arrondie, l'angle inférieur de droite était déjà cassé depuis fort long-temps.*' From his sketch also of the Stone, he admits it not to have been rounded, but square at the bottom; but the fact of this being so cannot but be of importance to him, as it will give him the comfortable assurance that in the lower corner sides there are not so many words of the Inscription missing as would be the case if it were square at the bottom, as he was wrongly informed by his authority; for, as in the upper part, so also in the lower, in exactly the same way the lines become smaller by degrees. *Pall Mall Gazette*, April 19th, 1870. *Palestine Exploration Society, Quarterly Statement*, No. vi., p. 282. It is strange that Professor Rawlinson, who published an article on the Moabite Stone in the *Contemporary Review* of August, 1870, more than three months after the appearance of Mr. Klein's letter in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and more than a month after it was republished in the *Palestine Exploration Society, Quarterly Statement*, still represents the Moabite Stone as square at the bottom. Mr. Klein's measurements of the Stone are also different from those of M. Ganneau, as may be seen from the following comparison:—

| KLEIN.    |     |     |     |                         | GANNEAU.  |     |     |     |                   |
|-----------|-----|-----|-----|-------------------------|-----------|-----|-----|-----|-------------------|
| Heighth   | ... | ... | ... | 1 mètre 13 centimètres. | Heighth   | ... | ... | ... | 1 mètre.          |
| Breadth   | ... | ... | ... | „ 70 centimètres.       | Breadth   | ... | ... | ... | „ 60 centimètres. |
| Thickness | ... | ... | ... | „ 35 centimètres.       | Thickness | ... | ... | ... | „ 60 centimètres. |

wonder that the men of Kerak, and many others in that country, should wish to become agents to "the rich Englishman" in this matter, and try to make as good a bargain as possible. Captain Warren, however, knowing that "the Prussian Consul was moving in the matter to get possession of it," and that he had actually "obtained a firman for the Stone," like an English gentleman, would take no action, and did not feel at liberty to concern himself about it, until the spring of 1869.

It was at this time that another antiquarian appeared on the scene. The Rev. Dr. Barclay related the circumstances of the Stone, and the slow process by which the Prussians tried to secure it, both to Captain Warren and M. Clermont-Ganneau, of the French Consulate at Jerusalem, in the spring of 1869. Both these gentlemen expressed their astonishment when they heard that no squeeze or copy of the inscription had been taken. All that the two Englishmen, *i. e.* Captain Warren and Dr. Barclay, could do, was to call on Mr. Klein to ascertain the progress made by the Prussian officials in securing the monument, and Captain Warren was then obliged to leave Jerusalem for the Lebanon, in July, 1869.

M. Ganneau, however, who remained on the spot, was not deterred from moving in the matter, though he knew that the Prussians were first in the field, and that they were making every exertion to secure it for the Berlin Museum. Surmising the importance of this ancient relic, this young French *savant*, with more enthusiasm than discretion, employed several agents to obtain squeezes, and even the Stone itself, and actually promised for it 200 medshidjes, or about £375. This was too great a temptation, and a bait for the different chiefs, each one of whom naturally wished to obtain the prize. When the Governor of Nablûs heard that there was a Stone at Dibon, for which a lot of money had been offered by the Franks, and that there had already been fighting among the Arabs, &c., whom M. Ganneau had sent across the Dead Sea to take the squeezes, he put pressure upon the Bedouins, through the Modir of es-Salt, to obtain the prize for himself. The Moabites, thus exasperated, "sooner than give it up, put a fire under it and threw cold water on it, and so broke it, and then distributed the bits among the different families, to place in the granaries, and act as blessings upon the corn; for they say that without the Stone (or its equivalent in hard cash) a blight will fall upon their crops." When Captain Warren, was returning from the Lebanon to Jerusalem, in November, 1869, he was met on the road, half-way up from Jaffa, by an Adwân, who informed this indefatigable explorer of the melancholy fact that the Stone at Dhibân was broken, and as proof produced a piece of it with letters, which he gave to the Captain.

It is, therefore, not too much to say, that the very oldest Semitic lapidary record of importance yet discovered, which had defied the corroding powers of more than 2,500 years, was at last broken up, through the unwise measures adopted by a young French *savant*, who, in spite of knowing that others were first in the field bidding for it, was determined to outbid them, in order to secure it for his own nation. Had M. Ganneau entertained the same disinterested sentiments, and acted upon the same principle, as Captain Warren,—that it mattered little "whether the Stone got to Berlin, London, or Paris,"—this precious relic might, in all probability, have now been in its original state in one of the European Museums. In mitigation, however, of M. Ganneau's precipitate and hasty action, it must be stated that he was the first to recognise the immense importance of the monument. Still the fact that he never even mentions Mr. Klein's name, nor says a word that the Prussians were endeavouring to secure it, in his account of the Moabite Stone, will always show that he was more jealous to appear as the original discoverer of the monument, than to give credit to whom credit is due.

As this account of the mournful history of the Moabite Stone, which I gave in the first edition of my

In a letter from Dr. Meyer, Chancellor of the North German Consulate at Jerusalem, just published in the *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* (vol. xxiv. p. 236), Dr. M. says that the Pasha of Nablus had engaged to deliver the Stone into the hands of the Consul for 100 Napoleons, = £80 ("Der Pasha von Nablus, in December durch einen von uns ausgewirkten Firman vom Wali zu Damascus beordert, den Stein in unsere Hände zu schaffen—für 100 Nap. d'or -forderte die Beni Hamide auf, den Stein herauszugeben.") So that M. Ganneau, who tells us that Sheikh Id el-Fa'iz "demanda quatre cents médjidiés, dont je lui donnai moitié d'avance," promised to give more than four times the amount for which the Stone was to have been delivered to the German Consulate.

<sup>2</sup> Captain Warren, *First Account of the Inscription from Moab*, Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement, No. v., p. 170.



Treatise, has been questioned by some of M. Ganneau's friends, who thought that I exhibited him in too dark a light, I subjoin the following literal translation of the official Report just published.<sup>1</sup>

"At the end of August 1868, my friend the Rev. F. Klein, of the Church Missionary Society, returned to Jerusalem from a journey round the Dead Sea. The day after his arrival he gave me an account of it in the presence of three friends, when he called my special attention to a Stone which the Bedouins in the neighbourhood of Diban, the ancient Dibon, showed him, remarking expressly that he was the first European who got to know of it. According to his statement, which was taken from notes in his diary, it was three spans wide, five spans long, and one and a half spans thick, (*i.e.* seventy centimetres wide, one metre thirteen centimetres long, and thirty-five centimetres in thickness,) probably basalt,<sup>2</sup> and had a very plain Inscription of thirty-three lines,<sup>3</sup> very well preserved, and only on the upper part some lines were a little obliterated. Not being prepared for such a find, he had no squeeze paper; and as he was obliged to leave soon, he could make no transcript of the whole, but only copied a few signs, which I at once recognised as Phœnician. By the next post, August 29th, I wrote about it to Berlin, and apprehending danger in delay, I requested a telegram in reply, whether the directors of the Royal Museum were inclined to pay 100 Napoleons, if necessary, for the purchase of the Stone. On September 15, I received a telegram from H. Lepsius, authorising me to spend this sum.

"To avoid any collision, I requested both Mr. Klein and the three others who were present, not to mention it to anybody. One of them however confessed that he had already spoken about it to Dr. Barclay, the senior clergyman to the Jewish Mission. Probably he mentioned it to Captain Warren, as would appear from his report. Both however were discreet enough to make no use of it, as they learned that I was very anxious to obtain the Stone. It was only after my departure, when they probably thought that our Consulate would manifest no further interest in it, that M. Ganneau, of the French Consulate, got to know of it, either through them or through the Arab Saba Cawâr, whom I had dispatched to the Bedouins.

"As soon as I obtained the authority from Berlin I consulted with Mr. Klein, who, through long intercourse with the Arabs, had not only acquired a thorough knowledge of their language but also great experience, as to the best mode of proceeding in order to obtain the Stone. He wrote a letter to the chief Sheikh Fendi Feiz, whose authority the Bedouins of Diban acknowledged, requesting his help to obtain the Stone, as he believed that by this means he would be able to buy it cheaper. With this letter and blankets which I purchased as packing for the Stone, we immediately dispatched from Salt a very clever teacher named Behnam, who was known to the Sheikh. For a long time I waited in vain for an answer. At last it arrived, but it was by no means satisfactory. The first information (*i.e.*, in September) was to the effect that the principal Sheikh in question wished to consult with the one on whose territory the Stone was lying. But shortly after the Sheikh went to Damascus, without having first consulted with him. After his return he informed us to our great regret that he could do nothing in the matter. On the advice of Mr. Klein I made a second attempt, and in the beginning of March, 1869, dispatched direct to Diban at my own cost, another Arab teacher Saba Cawâr, of Jerusalem, who was also intimate with the Bedouins. That he might induce them at once, I gave him fifty-three Napoleons, three of which were for the expenses of his journey, and promised him that if he brought the Stone undamaged to Jerusalem, I would give him fifty Napoleons more without any regard as to what he paid for it. Unfortunately he too returned without the Stone, and informed me that the Bedouins had concealed it. He had indeed seen it, but they did not ask now 100 Napoleons for it, but 1000; or rather 100,000 piastres, about £1000. As I could not entertain this demand, I immediately wrote March 19, 1869, to Berlin, that I was now of opinion the Stone could only be obtained through the intervention of the Turkish government. In consequence of this a letter arrived in June from the Grand Vizier, but it was addressed to the Pasha of Jerusalem, whose authority

<sup>1</sup> Petermann, *Ueber die Auffindung der Moabitischen Inschrift des Königs Mesa*, *Zeitschrift der Deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft*. — Vol. xxiv., pp. 640—644, Leipzig, 1870.

<sup>2</sup> From the fragments which M. Ganneau and the Palestine Exploration Society possess, it is now established beyond doubt that the stone is basalt.

<sup>3</sup> This must be a mistake, since M. Klein has not only stated in two accounts published by himself, that the Stone contained 31 lines, but when in conversation with him I called attention to the above statement, he emphatically declared to me that it was a mistake.

does not extend beyond the transjordanic countries, asking him "to allow me to remove the Stone at my expense, in case he had no scruples about it." The Pasha had just then gone to a Conference at Beyrout, whither I dispatched the letter, that it might be handed over to him by the North German Consulate there. In the meantime the Pasha came back, and I had to wait for the return of the letter, so that several weeks again elapsed. On June 23rd I sent the letter to the Pasha, and as might have been expected, received from him an answer that he could not do anything direct in the matter, since it belonged to the district of his equal the Pasha of Nablus, and who could only receive the command from the Governor-General in Damascus. He however sent me an open letter to the Wali of Damascus, requesting him to order further steps to be taken. This I dispatched with the letter of the Vizier to the Consulate of the Confederation in Beyrout, and requested that both should be forwarded to the Governor-General.

"Before the answer arrived at Jerusalem I left, but earnestly requested the Chancellor, Dr. Meycr, to do all in his power in order to secure the Stone, which he did.

"From this point the account is taken from the Report of the Consulate of the Confederation at Jerusalem to the Chancellor of the Confederation, dated April 29th, 1870.

"The Consulate made every endeavour to obtain at least a squeeze, but Mr. Klein, as well as Saba Cawâr, declared that the Bedouins, according to the most recent enquiries, had buried the Stone and considered it as the sanctuary of a demon. They would not allow a squeeze of it, because this would deprive the Stone of its inherent demoniac power. The answer of the Wali from Damascus was eagerly expected, but it did not come, and as even the Governor-General left Damascus for some time a speedy dispatch of the Firman was not to be thought of.

"In the middle of October 1869, the said Saba Cawâr appeared again at the Consulate, and declared that the moment was favourable for bringing the Stone to Jerusalem for the sum of 120 Napoleons. The chief Sheikh of the Beni Hamide offered to deliver the Stone under certain conditions. The Consul-General, Herr Von Alten, did not hesitate to advance from his own pocket the sum above the 100 Napoleons granted to me by the Directors of the Royal Museum, and gave the 120 Napoleons to Saba Cawâr, with the condition that if he delivered the Stone at the Consulate within thirty days from the end of October, he would require no account as to the expenditure of the 120 Napoleons; but if the conditions were not fulfilled within the time specified, he would be obliged to return the 120 pieces of gold. Saba Cawâr gladly accepted these conditions. He again undertook a journey, *made a contract d'achat on the spot in his name with the Sheikh of the Beni Hamide, in which the latter undertook to deliver the Stone for the stipulated sum as soon as it was wished.* He now found new difficulties in the way on account of the transport to Jerusalem. Kaplan, the Sheikh of the Adwan-Bedouins, probably through the instigation of some jealous relatives of the Sheikh of the Beni Hamide, would not allow it to pass through his territory without molestation. Added to this M. Ganneau and the French Consulate were not inactive, but tried everything to obtain the Stone for themselves. Be it that Saba Cawâr offered the Sheikh of the Adwan too little Bakshish, or that the latter acted in the interest of the French; suffice it to say, Saba Cawâr informed Herr Von Alten through Mr. Klein, that if the Wali of Damascus did not use his influence it would be impossible to obtain the Stone. This happened in the beginning of November, at the time of the great visits to Jerusalem, on which occasion the Governor-General of Syria also spends a day there. As Herr Von Alten, after several attempts, could not get to see him, he applied to him in writing with reference to the Firman from Constantinople, and received an answer on the same day that he could do nothing for the Stone in the interest of the Consulate, since the inspection of it by foreigners yields an income to the Beni Hamide, and that the removal of it he feared would cause a fresh revolt. That the Governor-General was entirely mistaken on this point, any one will see who knows that Mr. Klein, of Jerusalem, was the first foreigner who got to know the existence of this monument, and who reflects how after this time the Bedouins guarded the Stone as a sanctuary, in order to keep it from the sight of the Franks, who, besides most rarely touch that very dangerous territory. Moreover Saba Cawâr had actually purchased the Stone for the Consulate in a contract voluntarily entered upon on the part of the Bedouins.

"On October 13th Herr Von Alten met the Wali in Jaffa and spoke to him. The issue of this conversation was that

the Wali wished to see the contract of purchase which Saba Cawâr made with the Beni Hamide, and promised to do all in his power. Herr Von Alten forthwith charged Dr. Meyer, the Chancellor, to dispatch an especial messenger to Saba Cawâr, who was still on the other side of the Jordan, to bring the contract to Damascus, and then to demand from the Governor-General protection of the Stone as the property of the Consulate against the difficulties which the hostile Bedouins might place in the way of its transport. This was done at once, and on October 20th the contract was dispatched by means of the Beyrout Consulate to the address of the Governor-General.

"In the meantime Saba Cawâr returned after the lapse of the thirty days, to await in Jerusalem the expected answer from Damascus; and then with the help of the Pasha of Nablus to transport the Stone to Jerusalem.

"Then the report suddenly arrived that the Pasha of Nablus demanded the delivery of the monument from the Beni Hamide; and that owing to this, the Bedouins from hatred to the Turkish Governor, broke the Stone so as to prevent its falling into his hands. Unfortunately, the truth of this report, which was at first made known by Saba Cawâr was soon confirmed. The Bedouins on the other side of the Jordan, which fought with the Wali only in the preceding summer, and were ultimately overthrown, could not subdue their hatred against their old enemy, and endeavoured to show it even on this occasion. Thus far the share of the Consulate at Jerusalem to obtain the Stone.

"As to the share of M. Ganneau, after obtaining also from Salt further information about the existence of the Stone, he first sent an Arab to the Beni Hamide. In attempting to obtain a squeeze of the Stone, he was so much disturbed, that he was glad to escape the threatening attacks of the Bedouins, with some wet paper fragments. M. Ganneau, too, who has lived several years in Jerusalem, did not venture to undertake the very costly journey in the transjordanic territory, because he knew well the dangerous position of a European in attempting to obtain such a monument from the Bedouins. After the Stone was destroyed, he as well as Captain Warren obtained through the agency of an Arab a squeeze of the two chief fragments, together with some smaller ones. From these he began to reconstruct the Inscription, and then forwarded it to the Count de Vogüé.

"It is evident from the above official report *that the German clergyman, the Rev. Mr. Klein, discovered the Stone, and communicated with the German Consulate in order to secure it*, that a contract was made by the Consulate with the proprietors of it, and that the delivery of the Stone to the Consulate was ordered by the Turkish Government. According to the common rules of discretion it would be expected that no one would interfere with the progress of this affair before it was announced that the negotiations were either concluded or broken off."

From the foregoing Report it will be seen that Mr. Klein communicated his discovery of the Stone to Dr. Petermann in August, 1868; that negotiations to obtain this monument for the Berlin Museum were *at once* set on foot; that the negotiations were anxiously and uninterruptedly carried on till the ancient relic was broken in pieces in November, 1869; and that immediately after these negotiations were entered upon, both its discovery and the Prussian Consulate's endeavours to secure it were perfectly well known in Jerusalem, as the whole affair was no longer a secret. Now it was only in October, 1869, that M. Ganneau obtained independent information and the rough copy of a few signs of the Stone, hence fourteen months after its discovery by Mr. Klein. Moreover, M. Ganneau's endeavours to secure the Stone for himself were indisputably made at the very time when it was perfectly well known that the German Consulate's negotiations were being carried on, thus bringing in collision two opposite bidders and thereby imperilling the monument itself. With these facts before us, we must confess that the Official Report treats M. Ganneau very courteously when it simply states that "according to the common rules of discretion it would be expected that no one would interfere with the progress of this affair before it was announced that the negotiations were either concluded or broken off."

## II.—THE RESTORATION AND THE PRESENT CONDITION OF THE TEXT.

IT has already been stated that M. Ganneau, whilst negotiating for the stone itself, took care that, whatever the issue of his negotiations, he should have a squeeze of the inscription, which, in fact, was to guide him in his offer for it. Accordingly, he despatched an intelligent young Arab, accompanied by two mounted horsemen, to Dibon, and supplied them with the necessary materials for taking impressions of the Stone. The Beni Hamide, who considered themselves the proprietors of it, found it to their interest to allow squeezes to be taken. The Arabs, however, seemed not to have been able to determine their exact partnership in the relic, and got to fighting over it, whilst Yaquob Caravacca, the messenger of M. Ganneau, was engaged in taking the squeeze. The impression was therefore imperfectly done, and saved with difficulty.<sup>1</sup> Having been taken off whilst wet, the squeeze got torn and crumpled in drying, and was brought to M. Ganneau in seven fragments.

Captain Warren, who now began to fear lest the Stone should be lost to the world, sent his Adwân at once with squeeze paper, to secure an impression of the pieces; and on the 15th January, 1870, this Bedouin returned with two excellent squeezes of the two large fragments, respectively marked A and B, as well as with twelve small pièces of the Stone itself, each having a letter or two. The same day M. Ganneau's Bedouin also brought him squeezes of the identical two fragments, and on comparing the respective impressions, it was found that certain parts were in each squeeze more or less perfect than in the other. Captain Warren's Bedouin subsequently also brought another "very excellent squeeze of the larger fragment, *i.e.*, B." The materials therefore from which the restoration of the monument was effected, are, *i.*, A squeeze of the whole Stone, as it was first discovered, in very bad condition; *ii.* Captain Warren's two very excellent squeezes of the two large fragments, which represent about half of the entire surface; *iii.*, Captain Warren's second squeeze of the larger fragment, *i.e.*, B; *iv.* M. Ganneau's rubbings of the lower fragments, obtained independently, which supplement each other; and *v.*, a number of small pieces of the Stone itself.

It is from these materials that M. Ganneau has reconstructed the text. We greatly regret that this ingenious scholar has neither furnished us with *fac-similes* of the other eighteen fragments in his possession, nor of the original squeeze taken of the whole Stone *in situ*. Indeed he has not even described the contents of each of the smaller pieces which he possesses so as to enable us to see which words he took from the sundry fragments of the Stone itself, and which from the cast, or how he joined the several pieces into one whole. It is therefore impossible to say whether in joining the detached fragments together he was guided by their fitting into one another, or by the original paper cast of the entire Stone, or by the sense, or by a careful study and comparison of all these aids put together.

An examination however of M. Ganneau's and Captain Warren's texts of the two large fragments will show that in spite of the material variations in these respective transcripts the young French *savant* has performed his task in a most scholarly, careful, and conscientious manner, and that his text can be relied upon; whilst Captain Warren, though equally indefatigable and scrupulous, did not bring to his transcript that knowledge of the language which is absolutely essential to the deciphering of such a monument, and hence copied his squeezes in a purely

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Klein declares that "the Stone was lying among the ruins of Dibon perfectly free and exposed to view, the Inscription uppermost. I got four men to turn it round." Comparing this with M. Ganneau's contradictory accounts, Professor Davidson rightly remarks, "thus M. Ganneau's splendid tableau of the Sheikh throwing himself into the hole where the Stone was lying, grasping the wet paper, and thrusting it crumpled and torn into his robe, jumping on his horse and galloping off "*ventre à terre*," to join his two companions, is worthy of a place beside the other historical paintings of his country on the walls of the Louvre."—(*British and Foreign Evangelical Review*, Feb. 1871, p. 147.)

mechanical manner, as will be seen from the following table of variations taken from Fragments A and B. As Captain Warren published two photographs exhibiting two different tracings of Fragment B, one dated January 20, 1870, and the other February 12, 1870, respectively marked No. 3 and No. 4 on the Photographic Sheet of "the Palestine Exploration Society," we shall describe the differences in this duplicate as 3 and 4.

| Line | M. Ganneau. | Capt. Warren. | Line | M. Ganneau. | Capt. Warren.              | Line | M. Ganneau. | Capt. Warren.          |
|------|-------------|---------------|------|-------------|----------------------------|------|-------------|------------------------|
| 2    | מלך         | מלש           | 7    | וארא        | ארא                        | 20   | מאתן        | מאשן                   |
| 3    | הבמת זאת    | הבמד מא . ת   | 16   | שבעת אלפן   | בהת תל                     | 22   | הפעל        | הער                    |
| 4    | השלכן       | הדלכן         | 17   | חמת         | מתל                        | 33   | בת מלך      | ב . לך }<br>בן מלך 4 } |
| 5    | מלך         | נלך           | 18   | ואסחב       | ואה רש                     |      |             |                        |
| "    | מאב         | נאב           | 19   | בהלתחמה     | בקלשחמה 3 }<br>כבלתחמה 4 } |      |             |                        |

The simple exhibition of these variations will convince any impartial reader of the high value of M. Ganneau's labours. Indeed since he published the first transcript of the mutilated text this enthusiastic scholar has incessantly prosecuted his studies of the sundry materials in his possession, and as results of his research, issued two revised texts with elaborate notes.

But notwithstanding these materials, from which the text has been restored, there are lacunæ not only at the end, but in the middle, of all the lines except six, which are perfect. The condition of the text will be best understood from the following figures: Taking each line to average about nine and a quarter words, the thirty-four lines of the Inscription, in its perfect state, must have had about three hundred and thirteen words, and about eleven hundred letters, and not a thousand as M. Ganneau calculates.<sup>1</sup> The lacunæ, in the present restored text, both from the actual fragments and the squeeze before the stone was broken, consist of about thirty-five entire words, fifteen half words, and eighteen letters; thus amounting to less than a seventh. Nearly two-thirds of the Stone itself, consisting of thirty-eight fragments, are now in the possession of M. Ganneau and the Palestine Exploration Society. Of the twenty fragments which M. Ganneau recovered, fragment A contains one hundred and fifty, fragment B three hundred and fifty-eight; the next larger contains thirty-eight; and the remaining seventeen fragments contain sixty-seven, making in all, six hundred and thirteen letters; whilst the eighteen small fragments in the possession of the Palestine Exploration Society contain fifty-six letters; thus making a total of six hundred and sixty-nine letters out of the eleven hundred.

<sup>1</sup> In justification of our statement that the Stone in its entirety must have had about 1,100 letters and not 1,000 as M. Ganneau asserts, we have simply to remark that the Inscription in its present defective condition has 965 letters, and that 101 letters are wanting in those lines in which the lacunæ can be filled up from the connection exclusive of the mutilated last four lines. Taking the top four rounded off lines, which have 112 letters, as our standard for the bottom four lines which are rounded off in a similar manner, and which at present only contain 59 letters, 53 letters are wanting in these four lines by themselves. If we add 53 to the 1,066 we have 1,119 letters. Had Professor Davidson taken the trouble of counting the existing letters as well as the number of those which the lacunæ will admit, he would not have questioned our calculation. (*British and Foreign Evangelical Review*, p. 149, February, 1871.)

### III. CONTENTS, DIVISION, AND DATE OF THE INSCRIPTION.

This Monument records three great events in the reign of Mesha, King of the Moabites, and is, therefore, divisible into three parts as follows :

THE FIRST PART, 1—21 *a*, records the wars of Mesha with Omri, King of Israel, and his successors. Having given his own name and that of his father, as well as the duration of his paternal reign (1—3*a*), Mesha states that he erected this Monument to his national God, Chemosh, as a token of gratitude for the deliverance from the forty years' oppression, by Omri, King of Israel, and his successors (3 *b*—9 *a*). Through the mercy of Chemosh, Mesha was enabled to fortify Baal-Meon, and make from it a successful attack upon Kirjathaim; to take Ataroth, which the tribe of Gad had occupied from time immemorial, and which was fortified by the King of Israel, to devote to destruction all its inhabitants as an offering to his God, and to repeople the places with loyal subjects from Siran and Mochrath (9 *b*—14 *a*). Chemosh then told him to assault Nebo, which he successfully effected, slaying about seven thousand men, devoting the women to Astar-Chemosh, and the vessels of Jehovah to Chemosh (14 *b*—18 *a*). Hereupon the King of Israel fortified Jahaz, from which he attacked Mesha, but Chemosh made him relinquish the battle, and go back with the army to his own country (18 *b*—19), when Mesha captured Jahaz, repopled the city, and attached it to Dibon (20—21 *a*).

THE SECOND PART, 21 *b*—31 *a*, celebrates the public works undertaken by Mesha, after his deliverance from his Jewish oppressors. The sudden withdrawal of the foreign army enables him to devote himself to the restoration of those cities which his enemies destroyed during the protracted wars. Chief among the works is the restoration of Karcha, with its parks, fortifications, gates, towers, palace, prison, and water-works (21 *b* 26 *a*); then come the rebuilding of Aroer, the construction of the road across the Arnon, the rebuilding of Beth Bamoth and Bezer, which he could now effect, as Dibon, whose former inhabitants destroyed them, was now loyal (26 *b*—28 *a*); the addition of a new city to his dominions, the rebuilding of Beth Gamul, Beth Diblathaim, and Beth-Baal-Meon, which he colonised with faithful Moabites (28 *b*—31 *a*).

THE THIRD PART, 31 *b*—34, records his successful wars against the Horonajim, or the Edomites, which he undertook by the express command of Chemosh.

It is the first part of this Inscription which fixes its date, inasmuch as there can be no reasonable doubt that Omri, who is here described as the oppressor of Moab, is the King of Israel mentioned in the Bible (1 Kings, xvi. 16—28, &c). The resubjugation of Moab by Omri took place in the days of Mesha's father, Chemosh-Gad (*circa* B.C. 936), and as it lasted forty years, the deliverance of Moab must have been effected *circa* B.C. 896. A few years must necessarily have elapsed between the expulsion of the old enemy and the erection of the buildings described in the Inscription. We may therefore conclude that Mesha erected this monolith about 890, when no fear of the invaders' return was entertained, when the independence of the empire was secured, and when the public edifices were finished.

#### IV. THE RELATION OF THIS INSCRIPTION TO THE BIBLICAL NARRATIVE.

To understand the connection of the import of this Inscription with the account given in 2 Kings iii. 4—27, it will be necessary to give a summary of the latter. The story in 2 Kings is briefly as follows :

Mesha, King of Moab, who was rich in cattle, and who, as tributary sovereign, paid to the King of Israel an annual tribute of one hundred thousand wethers and one hundred thousand rams with their wool, revolted after the death of Ahab,\* and upon the succession of Ahaziah to the throne (2 Kings iii. 4—6). So lucrative a vassal, however, the Kingdom of Israel was unwilling to relinquish; hence when Jehoram succeeded to the throne, upon the death of his brother Ahaziah, he secured the help of Jehosaphat, King of Judah, and that of his tributary the King of Edom, to reduce the King of Moab to obedience, and accordingly the united three Kings of Israel, Judah, and Edom, marched, by a circuitous route of seven days, against Mesha (7—9 *a*). On their approach to Moab, the allied armies were in the utmost danger of perishing for want of water (9 *b*). Jehosaphat, however, upon inquiry, found that Elisha was with the host, and he with the Kings of Judah and Edom, went to the Prophet (10—12), who though severely rebuking the King of Israel, and referring him to the Prophets of Baal, the God of his father and mother, nevertheless, for the sake of Jehosaphat, King of Judah, inquired of Jehovah, and received the promise that there would not only be a plentiful supply of water, but that the King of Moab should be utterly discomfited (13—18). When this miraculous supply of water arrived, which preserved the allied armies, it became in a marvellous way the means of defeating the Moabite host, for to the Moabites who heard of the invasion, and were marching to defend the borders, it appeared to be the blood of the allies, who having fallen out, had slain each other (20—23 *a*). The Moabite soldiers incautiously rushed for the supposed spoil, were surprised by the allies, routed, pursued into their own land, and slaughtered without mercy. The cities into which they fled were also destroyed, and it was only in the stronghold of Kirharaseth that the King of Moab could take up his position of defence (23 *b*—25). Here he made a vigorous attempt with 700 men to break through the besieging enemy, and when beaten back, he offered up his eldest son, the heir to the throne, as a burnt offering to Chemosh, upon the city wall, in the sight of the invaders. This sacrifice had the desired effect, for the invaders were severely chastised, or as it is euphemistically expressed, “and there was great indignation against Israel, and they departed from him, and returned to their own land” (26—27).

That this description of the invasion of Moab refers to the same events described in the Inscription is evident from the following facts : 1. Mesha whose exploits are celebrated on this triumphal pillar, like Mesha of the Old Testament, waged a terrible war with Israel for the liberation of his country; and 2. Mesha of this Monolith, like Mesha of the Scriptures, carried on a protracted conflict with the Omri dynasty. As the whole dynasty of Omri only lasted about forty years, and, moreover, as Mesha was a contemporary of Ahab, Ahaziah, and Jehoram, it would be preposterous to maintain that in the short space of about twenty years two Kings of Moab flourished, both bearing the same name and both fighting the same battles with the same Kings of Israel. There can therefore be no doubt that Mesha of this Monolith is identical with the Mesha mentioned in 2 Kings iii. and that the wars described in the two documents are the same. The differences between the two narratives are such as might be expected in two records of the same events emanating from two hostile parties, and are far less striking than the conflicting descriptions given by the English and French of the battle of Waterloo; by the English, French, and Russians, of the capture of Sebastopol; by the Prussians and Austrians of the battle of Sadowa, or by the French and Germans of the

\* As this tribute appears too enormous for the resources of a country not so large as the county of Huntingdon, to be raised year by year, besides what was requisite for the support of its own inhabitants, some have supposed that it was not an annual tribute, but simply satisfaction for the damages which the Israelites sustained in the war with the Moabites, or, as the Septuagint takes it, for the loss incurred in the revolt. Against this, however, is to be urged that if the “one hundred thousand wethers and one hundred thousand rams with their wool” had been paid once only for damages, and were not repeated as an annual tribute, it would be perfectly inexplicable why Mesha revolted, and in what the grinding oppression consisted which led to the revolt. But the difficulty is removed by this Inscription, from which it appears that Ahab aggravated the oppression of Moab (lines 6, 7,) which undoubtedly consisted in the increase of tribute, so that this heavy tax was only paid a very short time.

battle of Woerth. But though the two records are of the same campaign they nevertheless describe different strategical operations connected therewith. Indeed, it is only by a careful comparison of both documents, and by piecing together the fragmentary notes of both, that we obtain an intelligible and complete survey of the expedition. Thus, the Biblical record tells us that immediately after the death of Ahab (B.C. 898) Moab revolted, that for at least two years, *i.e.* during the reign of Ahaziah, no steps were taken to reclaim it, and that it was Jehoram who determined to resubjugate it (1 Kings i. 1; iii. 4—6). Whether this revolt was suddenly effected because the Moabites did not relish being vassals to the kings of Israel, or whether the chain of thralldom had been made heavier by Ahab and thus provoked the revolt, or whether the use the Moabites made of their two years' independence to fortify themselves against an attempt on the part of the Kings of Israel to resubjugate them, which most assuredly must have been expected, the sacred narrative does not state. This, however, is supplied by the Moabite Stone. It tells us that Ahab aggravated the oppression of the Moabites (lines 6, 7) and in all probability increased the annual tribute of cattle to the prodigious number mentioned in the Bible (2 Kings iii. 4). It, moreover, shows that the revolt was not a sudden surprise on the Cis-Arnonic Jewish garrison, but was effected by Mesha taking the places fortified by Jewish invaders one by one, and that Mesha employed the time of his independence (*i.e.* the two years of Ahaziah's reign) in rebuilding, refortifying, and repeopling the very strongholds which he had captured from the enemy (lines 8—18). All these fightings and victories Mesha carried on with and gained over the Jewish soldiers and generals who occupied Moab under Ahab. When Jehoram, however, succeeded to the throne he determined to avenge the defeats which the Jewish army had sustained and to resubjugate the liberated territory. Hence the Monolith tells us that the King of Israel himself commanding in person, took the offensive, occupied and fortified Jahaz to operate therefrom upon the different parts of the rebellious country. But the victorious Mesha had prepared himself during his independence for all emergencies. The King of Israel was soon convinced of this as well as of the fact that he could not possibly reconquer Moab by invading the North of the Arnonic fortified country, nor effect it single handed by making an incursion on the South Arnonic territory. Hence he not only relinquished the campaign in the north, as the Moabite Stone states (lines 18—20), but organized the allied expedition to the South as is recorded in the Book of Kings (iii. 5, &c.) The fortunes of the first part of the campaign having already been decided against him in the North, the King of Israel with his two allies retired at once as soon as he saw that the second part of the campaign in the South was also against him. It was therefore his defeat in the North recorded on this Monolith which taught the King of Israel the strength of Mesha's army, which made him solicit the aid of the Kings of Judah and Edom, and which for the first time explains to us the reason why Jehoram found it necessary to organize the allied expedition to the South.

That Mesha should say nothing about the tribute which he had annually to pay to the King of Israel is perfectly natural. It is not to be expected that in a monument which is designed to celebrate his victories, and which is limited in space he would specify the particular acts of his humiliation. The categorical statement that he was oppressed forty years by Omri and his son is quite enough, and implies a tribute. It is for the record of the oppressor to say in what this vassalage consisted, and to describe the nature and amount of the tribute. Equally implied, though not expressed in this Inscription, is the combination of the three Kings, of Israel, Judah, and Edom, for the attack upon Moab in lines 4 and 5. The pregnant statement that Chemosh delivered Mesha "from all his enemies" so emphatically expressed in parallelism, undoubtedly shows that there was more than one enemy in the battle field, and that the King of Israel was the leader of combined hostile armies. Nor is it to be expected that Mesha would record the serious blunder which he committed in mistaking the water for blood, which was so disastrous to his army. The principal event, however, which he records, and for which this Pillar was designed, is fully borne out in 2 Kings iii. *viz.*, that he ultimately defeated the King of Israel with his allies, and freed himself and his land from his Israelitish enemies, and from a grinding oppression.

Indeed, this Inscription is not only in harmony with, but is explicatory of, the euphemistic termination of 2 Kings iii., which appears very enigmatical to many, and has given rise to a variety of interpretations. With no record that the Moabites ultimately defeated the allied armies, apart from the Inscription, it is difficult to account for the fact,



that, after recounting the victories which the three armies gained over the Moabites, the awful carnage which they inflicted upon them, and the destruction of cities and property which they caused, they all on a sudden quitted the country at the very time when they were to reap the gains of victory, simply because "there was great indignation against Israel" (2 Kings iii. 27), as if such ravages could be committed without rousing the anger of the ravaged. Was it the usual conduct of the Israelites in their wars to retire from the conflict and their victories as soon as they found that the people whom they vanquished became angry? The ancients felt the awkwardness of this dilemma, and hence made it out that it was pity for, and not the anger of, the Moabites which caused the allied armies to relinquish the battle field. Thus Josephus describes the event, or paraphrases this passage, as follows: "The King of Moab, when he was pursued, endured a siege, and seeing his city in danger of being overthrown by a force, made a sally and went out with seven hundred men, in order to break through the enemy's camp with his horsemen, on that side where the watch seemed to have been kept most negligently; and when upon trial, he could not get away, for he lighted upon a place that was carefully watched, he returned into the city, and did a thing that showed despair and the utmost distress, for he took his eldest son, who was to reign after him, and lifting him up upon the wall, that he might be visible to all the enemies, he offered him up as a whole burnt-offering to God, whom, when the Kings saw, they commiserated the distress that was the occasion of it, and were so affected, in the way of humanity and pity, that they raised the siege, and every one returned to his ownhouse."<sup>1</sup>

It requires no argument to show that this conversion of the anger manifested by the Moabites into humanity and pity shown by the allied armies, is simply a subterfuge to get over the difficulty in admitting that the Jews were beaten back and compelled to retire after the sacrifice made by Mesha. It is this fact, so euphemistically expressed in 2 Kings iii. 27, by the defeated, which is emphatically described and celebrated in this Inscription by the victor. That the Moabites, who, according to the account in 2 Kings iii., suffered so bitterly at first should at the end gain the victory, will not surprise any one who carefully peruses the Biblical account of this invasion by the allies. The fact that the King of Israel was afraid to undertake the expedition alone, and that he not only solicited the aid of Jehoshaphat, King of Judah, but also the co-operation of the King of Edom, and that even those three Kings, who in person commanded the allied armies, thought it more prudent and safe to resort to stratagem, and make a circuitous route of seven days, rather than confront the Moabite army in a straightforward invasion shows beyond doubt that the Moabites were most powerful, that the invaders knew it perfectly well, and that the change in the fortunes of war in favour of the invaded was perfectly natural.

We must now examine the relation of 2 Chron. xx. 1—30 to the events recorded on the Moabite Stone. According to Nöldeke "the wild story in 2 Chron. xx. 1—30 is simply a transformation of 2 Kings iii. with the omission of offensive parts such as the martial alliance of Jehoshaphat with the Kings of Israel and Edom, and the human sacrifice, and with the addition of all sorts of pious reflections."<sup>2</sup> If such treatment of a historical record were admissible, all further attempts at explanation would be needless, inasmuch as the identification of the expedition in 2 Kings iii. with Mesha's exploits celebrated on the Stone would necessarily include 2 Chron. xx. 1—30. A careful comparison, however, of 2 Kings iii. 4—27 with 2 Chron. xx. 1—30 will show that they record two totally different events. In 2 Kings iii. the land of Moab is invaded; in 2 Chron. xx. the land of Judah is overrun. In 2 Kings iii. the King of Israel organizes the expedition against his rebellious vassal aided by the Kings of Judah and Edom; in 2 Chron. xx. the assault is made on the King of Judah alone. In the former, three regular armies are led out of the country by three Kings; in the latter, three hordes not commanded by any sovereign are marched into the territory of one of the three Kings, who repels the invasion single-handed. The event, therefore, recorded in 2 Chron. xx. is not only distinct from the one in 2 Kings iii. but happened after it. It was planned, not by the King of Moab, but by many of his victorious soldiers who, in conjunction with Ammonite and Maonite hordes, were determined to chastise the King of Judah for the aid he rendered to the King of Israel in the expedition which is chronicled in 2 Kings iii., and the defeat of which is celebrated in this Inscription.

<sup>1</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.* ix. iii. § 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Die Inschrift des Königs Mesa von Moab*, p. 22.

## V.—IMPORTANCE OF THE MOABITE STONE HISTORICALLY, THEOLOGICALLY, LINGUISTICALLY, AND PALÆOGRAPHICALLY.

It may safely be asserted that among all the epigraphic monuments hitherto discovered, there is none which is of such importance to the *history* and *language* of the Old Testament, and to *palæography* generally, as this most ancient Semitic lapidary record, though it only consists of thirty-four lines. In exhibiting the light which it throws upon these departments, it will be more convenient to discuss each question separately. Accordingly, we shall begin with its historical importance.

1. The *historical importance* of the "Moabite Stone" to the Bible narrative will be apparent when we consider the fragmentary record of the relationship subsisting between the Hebrews and the Moabites as given in the Old Testament. The Biblical history of Moab before the establishment of the monarchy among the Jews is beyond the scope of our investigation. David, the second King of the Israelites, who himself was of Moabite descent, and who committed his parents to the care of the King of Moab (1 Sam. xxii. 3—5), for some reason which has hitherto defied all the powers of divining, and which may perhaps be explained by the discovery of another Moabite Stone, we are abruptly told waged a most bloody war against the king who had afforded protection to those so near and dear to him (2 Sam. viii. 2, 11, 12 : 1 Chron. xviii. 2, 11). We are told the result of this war was that this Shepherd King massacred two-thirds of the Moabites and despoiled and made tributary the remainder. Apart from the incidental remark that some of Solomon's foreign wives were Moabites, and that Chemosh the Moabite god was worshipped in Jerusalem (1 Kings xi. 1, 7, 33 : 2 Kings xxi. 13), we hear nothing of the relationship of Moab to the Kingdom of Israel for about eighty years, when we are suddenly informed that upon the death of Ahab they revolted to rid themselves of a grinding tribute (2 Kings iii. 4, &c.) Hence it has generally been concluded that the awful carnage inflicted upon them by David, which, according to the Biblical account, was little short of a virtual extirpation of the nation, had so thoroughly crippled and cowed the survivors, who were reduced to vassalage, that they continued after the disruption of the kingdom to be tributary to Israel up to the reign of Jehoram, when they revolted, refusing to pay the enormous contribution heretofore demanded.

From line five, however, of the Inscription we learn for the first time that the Moabites were re-conquered and re-subjugated by Omri, and that up to B.C. 936 they were free from Jewish vassalage. This, therefore, throws new light upon the Biblical history, inasmuch as it shows that the Moabites must either have taken advantage of the distracted state of Judæa at the time of Jeroboam I. (B.C. 975) to free themselves of the Jewish vassalage, or that they obtained their liberty under Solomon. We incline to the latter opinion. Solomon, remembering, it may be, that, whatever their conduct was which called forth his father's unquenchable vengeance, he himself was of Moabite origin, and that the Moabites afforded protection to his grand-parents when they were in imminent danger, regarded the awful sufferings inflicted upon them by David as a sufficient atonement for their sins, granted them their independence, which they maintained until the time of Omri, who, as we are informed in this Inscription, re-conquered them and reduced them to subjection. Solomon's friendly feelings towards the Moabites are plainly indicated in 1 Kings xi. 7; and his Moabite wives, who were so true to their national deity, and had such power over Solomon as to induce him not only to erect a temple to Chemosh on the Mount of Olives but also himself to worship him, were surely equally true to their relatives and country, and successfully influenced their spouse to liberate their nation. But the important declaration in the inscription that Omri re-conquered Moab, and that Mesha regained its independence, also explains other statements in the Old Testament which have hitherto been inexplicable. From the invasion of the land of

Moab, by the three allied armies of Israel, Judah, and Edom (*circa* B.C. 906 : comp. 2 Kings iii. 4—27) to the time of the death of Ahaz, king of Judah (*circa* B.C. 726 : comp. Isaiah xv. xvi.), a period of about 180 years, we hear nothing about the relation of the Moabites to the Israelites. On comparing the two documents, viz., 2 Kings iii. 4—27 and Isaiah xv. xvi., it will be seen that not only were the Moabites masters of the South Arnonic country, the strength of whose chief fortress resisted the attack of the combined armies (2 Kings iii. 25), but that at the time of Isaiah's prophecy they were actually in possession of all the North Arnonic cities and the whole district which the Amorites originally took from them (Numb. xxi. 26, &c.), and which having been taken from them was assigned to Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh (Numb. xxxii. 7—9; 29—38 : Deut. iii. 8—16). The question then arises—When did the Moabites re-conquer all the territory of the two tribes and a half? In what period of the Jewish History are the many years to be placed which were necessarily required for that high development of civilization, wealth, population, military prowess, renown, and national ambition depicted so vividly by Isaiah (xv. xvi.)?

The ancient commentators, with their usual disregard for historico-critical exegesis, pass the question over in silence. It is modern criticism which has perceived the difficulty and tried to solve it in the following manner. The Moabites who, since David, were subject to the Hebrews, and after the disruption, were tributary to the Kingdom of Israel, revolted after the death of Ahab, and not only successfully resisted the army of Jehoram (2 Sam. viii. 2 : 2 Kings i. 1 : iii. 4—27) but actually made war against Israel in the reigns of Jehu and Jehoahaz, may at that time (B.C. 896—867) have regained their ancient cities occupied by the transjordanic tribes. Jeroboam ii. however (B.C. 834—793), who “restored the coast of Israel,” conquered Moab, as is implied in the declaration that he extended his dominion from “Hamath unto the sea of the wilderness,” (2 Kings xiv. 25), according to the prediction of Amos (vi. 14). But after the death of this monarch, the Moabites, availing themselves of the long interregnum which followed (B.C. 793—721), recovered their cities, which could all the more easily be effected in consequence of the deportation of Reuben to Assyria, which was begun by Pul (B.C. 770) and completed by Tiglath-pileser (*circa* B.C. 740, comp. 1 Chron. v. 25, 26).<sup>1</sup>

A close examination, however, of this attempt to harmonise the several statements respecting the relationship of Israel and Moab will show that it bridges over the gaps in the Biblical history with theories and assumed facts which have no foundation in the Scriptures. Thus the declaration that Jeroboam ii. re-conquered the Moabites, after Jehoram failed to reduce them to their former vassalage, is simple assumption, since in the passage upon which it is based (2 Kings xiv. 25), the phrase that he extended his dominion to (ים הערבה) “the sea of the desert,” for which Amos (vi. 14) has “the river of (חל) the wilderness,” simply denotes, as Schlottmann remarks, the Wady Heshbon, or some other small Wady close by, but most assuredly not the Arnon. Had his conquest extended to this most ancient and famous boundary river it would undoubtedly have been emphatically mentioned by name. Equally imaginary is the assertion that Isaiah xv. xvi. refers to the re-conquests of their country made by the Moabites during the deportation of the Israelites by Pul (B.C. 770) and Tiglath-pileser (B.C. 740). Such a re-conquest at this time is not only ignored in every other part of the Scriptures, but is not even remotely hinted at in the Prophecy in question. Here then (Isa. xv. xvi.) where we should, as Gesenius remarks, have expected every wrong done to the Israelites by Moab, especially if of recent date, to be made prominent, there is no notice taken of the supposed usurpation of their territory,<sup>2</sup> a fact which shows that this did not take place.

Now it is this Inscription again which solves the difficulty by supplying us with the means of connecting the fragmentary statements in the Bible. It was Mesha, we are informed in this Triumphal Tablet, who re-conquered and re-built all the territory and the cities which the Israelites had anciently taken from the Moabites, and which Omri had again captured, *circa* B.C. 936. The country regained by this Moabite King from the transjordanic tribes remained in undisturbed possession of the Moabites up to the time when the “Burden of Moab” was pronounced (Isa. xv. xvi). This peaceful occupation of

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Knobel, *Der Prophet Isaia*, cap. xv. p. 115, &c. 3rd. ed. Leipzig, 1861 : Delitzsch, *Biblischer Commentar über den Prophet Jesaia*, cap. xv. p. 203. Leipzig, 1866 : Smith, *Dictionary of the Bible*, s. v. MOAB.

<sup>2</sup> Comp. Gesenius, *Commentar über den Isaia*, p. 502, &c. Leipzig, 1821 ; Kitto, *Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature*, s. v. MOABITES.

their land for upwards of a century and a half (B.C. 884—726) gave the Moabites ample time for development in material wealth, martial prowess, and intellectual culture. It is therefore the prolonged peace and security obtained for the Moabites, by the warlike exploits and industrial enterprises of Mesha, celebrated in the Moabite Stone, which explain the Isaianic "Burden of Moab." They, moreover, explain the fact that throughout this "Burden" the re-conquest by Moab of the north Armonic country occupied by the two tribes and a half is regarded as an old event, and that the Moabites are spoken of as the possessors of the land, without reciting their usurpation."<sup>1</sup>

Another important historical fact, which we for the first time learn from the Moabite Stone, is, that Mesha, after securing the independence of his territory, and restoring the different cities devastated or allowed to fall into ruins by the Israelitish invaders of his land, made Dibon the fortified capital of his dominion, and erected in it this Triumphal Tablet to celebrate his exploits.

II. The *Theological Importance* of the Moabite Stone can hardly be over-rated, though the contribution which it yields to this department consists in an incidental statement of a few words. In lines 14—18, where Mesha records his march against, assault on, and capture of Nebo, he tells us that he took from the captured city "the vessels of Jehovah," and dedicated them to Chemosh, the national deity of Moab. As these vessels of Jehovah must have been in a sanctuary devoted to the service of the God of Israel, we have here for the first time the positive information that the transjordanic tribes, who were too far removed from the central place of worship in the metropolis of Palestine, had a separate stated ritual. The fact that these "vessels" used in the service of Jehovah could so easily be converted into the worship of Chemosh shows beyond doubt that the special part of the ritual for which they were designed was common to the religion both of the Hebrews and of the Moabites. And as the sacrificial cult was *the most primitive and common to all nations*, we are justified in assuming that these vessels consisted of valuable altars, bowls, and musical instruments, used from time immemorial at the offering up of sacrifices. Whether the "the men of Gad who dwelt in the land from time of yore" (comp. line 10), and hence before the disruption of the kingdom and before the building of the temple by Solomon, made this sanctuary according to the pattern of the Tabernacle, or whether they made it in conformity with the Jerusalem Temple, it is impossible to divine. Suffice it to say that the Jewish tradition, which has always maintained that the Israelites had places of worship and study from time immemorial, wherever they lived,<sup>2</sup> is confirmed by the Moabite Stone. Henceforth, the treatment of the Jewish pre-exile mode of worship will be materially influenced by the statement in this Inscription.

Another point, of great importance to the theology and archæology of the Bible, is the mention of the name *Jehovah* on this Stone. It is well known to Biblical students that the pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton was only allowed in the priestly benediction in the Temple (*Mishna, Sota* vii. 6), that when the High Priest on the Great Day of Atonement uttered this incommunicable name, in confessing the sins of the nation over the national sacrifice, "all the priests and people in the outer court who heard it had to kneel down, bow and fall upon their faces, exclaiming, 'Blessed be the name of His glorious majesty for ever and ever!'" (*Mishna, Yoma* vi. 2,) and that any layman who pronounced it forfeited his life both in this world and in the world to come (*Mishna, Sanhedrin* vii. 5: x. 1.) That this reverence for the Tetragrammaton must have obtained at a very early period is evident from the fact that it is never employed in the Septuagint, the Apocrypha, or in the New Testament, or in the Samaritan version, as well as from the testimony of Josephus (*Antiq.* ii. 12), and Philo (*De Vita Mosis*). The Book of Enoch already speaks of the hidden Name (lxix. 14). Both Origen<sup>3</sup> and Jerome attest that the word *Jehovah* was actually retained in some ancient Codices of the Septuagint, in the old Hebrew characters **יהוה** because the superstition of the transcribers would not allow them to translate it even by *κύριος*. Jerome also says<sup>4</sup> that

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Schlottmann, *Die Siegessäule Mesas*, p. 39, Halle, 1870.

<sup>2</sup> Comp. Acts xv. 21; Philo, ii. 167; 630; Josephus, *Cont. Apion.* ii. 18; *Jerusalem Megilla* iv. 1; *Babylon Baba Kama* 82 a: *vide infra*, Commentary on line 18.

<sup>3</sup> *καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἀκριβέσι τῶν ἀντιγράφων ἑβραϊκοῖς ἀρχαίοις γράμμασι γέγραπται, ἀλλ' οὐχὶ τοῖς νῦν*, Montfaucon, *Prelim. ad Origenis Hexapla* i. 86; Hierom. *Præf. ad lib. Regem*.

<sup>4</sup> *Tetragrammaton quod ineffabile putaverunt quod quidam non intelligentes propter elementorum similitudinem, cum in græcis libris repererint, Pipi legere consueverunt.* Hierom. *Epist. cxxxi. ad Marcellam*.

"these four letters were taken by ignorant copyists to be Greek, and that they pronounced them PIPI." Hence in the Hebrew Scriptures this name (יהוה) is uniformly pointed (יהוה) with the vowel signs which belong to (יהוה), another appellation of the Deity, so as to avoid its utterance.<sup>1</sup> When we find that the use of this name is so scrupulously avoided, even in the very oldest portion of the Greek version of the Pentateuch, and therefore several centuries before Christ, the question naturally arises, At what period did this pious horror of pronouncing the Tetragrammaton originate? Tradition, which never experiences any difficulty, maintains that it obtained in the time of Moses, and that the Law distinctly forbids it in Levit. xxiv. 16. Hence the Septuagint rendering of this passage *ὁνομάθων τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου*, *let him who pronounceth the name of the Lord, &c.* From the Moabite Stone we see that B.C. 900 the name Jehovah was commonly pronounced by the Israelites, and that from its being so generally used by the Hebrews, the heathen took it as the characteristic name of the Jewish national Deity. We thus obtain the two limits of the period between which the Tetragrammaton ceased to be pronounced, *i.e.* circa B.C. 880—350.

On an examination of the condition of the Jews during these five hundred years and the influences to which they were exposed, we shall have no difficulty in ascertaining the source of this mystery and the approximate time when the pronounced divine name became an unpronounceable one. We find that among the heathen religions of antiquity there was a reluctance to pronounce the names of certain deities. In the Vedas we are told that "the gods like concealment" (*Asiatic Researches*, viii. 424). The Egyptians too would not utter the name of certain deities (Movers i. 540) and Herodotus considers it impious to communicate their names (ii. 132, 170). A deity whose name was not pronounced was designated ἄρρητος (Plutarch, *Cæsar* ix; Macrob. i. 9). There can therefore hardly be any doubt that the Alexandrian Jews, who espoused so many Greek philosophical notions from their neighbours, were the first to introduce it into Judaism and into the Septuagint. After it became current in the Alexandrian synagogues it soon found its way into Palestine, where it became as firmly rooted as in Alexandria. The Septuagint therefore in avoiding the pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton, so far from acting upon an ancient Palestinian law, was really the means of transplanting the pious horror of uttering the name Jehovah into Judea.<sup>2</sup>

III. The *linguistic importance* of the Moabite Stone may easily be conceived, when it is borne in mind that this is the only pre-Maccabean original document written in a language almost identical with the Biblical Hebrew. With an Inscription before us, the style of which is older than that of two-thirds of the entire Old Testament, and more pure than that of the one-third, which has unquestionably been retouched by later redactors, we may naturally ask, What, orthographically, are its bearings to the present Massoretically edited Scriptures? Are the roots and forms of its words the same as in the Biblical Hebrew? And how in point of syntax is the diction of the Moabite Stone related to that of the Hebrew Verity? In discussing these questions, we shall endeavour to be as elementary as possible, so that those who are tyros in this department may be able to follow the disquisition.

The question of the division of words, which has agitated the minds and exercised the ingenuity of many critics on the text of the Hebrew Scriptures will henceforth receive a different treatment, through the light thrown upon it by the Moabite Stone. It is well known that the ancients had no division of words, and that by far the greatest number of the Greek Inscriptions are written *continua serie*. And though it is true that some of the most ancient, especially the Euboeic, Tables have one or two, and others even three points as dividers of words, still these are the exception. In the Phœnician, which up to the discovery of the Moabite Stone was the most closely allied to the Hebrew, the *scriptio continua* was the rule, and only few of the epigraphic documents which have been discovered exhibit a division of words.<sup>3</sup> Hence it is maintained

<sup>1</sup> When, however, יהוה and ארני are combined, the vowel signs of אלהים are affixed to the Tetragrammaton. Comp. Kitto, *Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature*, s. v. KERI AND KETHIV.

<sup>2</sup> Comp. Grünbaum, *Bemerkungen über die Samaritaner* in the *Zeitschrift der Deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, vol. xvi. p. 400, &c.

<sup>3</sup> Comp. Schröder, *Die Phönizische Sprache*, § 16, p. 76. "The perpendicular line is employed in the Himyaritic inscriptions to separate single words, whence the double point (:) after each word in Æthiopic MSS.; and possibly the Hebrew Sôph-pâstik (:) may have had a similar origin. The Persian cuneiform inscriptions present a parallel in their use of a slanting wedge."—(Prof. Wright, *North British Review*, Oct. 1870.)

that "the sacred books of the Hebrews too could not have had a regular division of words." This conclusion from analogy has been supported by the following data: *i.* On no other hypothesis can the fact be explained, that all the most ancient versions exhibit, not in one book simply, but in all books, innumerable instances of a different division of words. Thus, for instance, in Ps. xlv. 5, "O God, command," the Septuagint has *ὁ θεός μου ὁ ἐντελλόμενος*, *my God the Commander*, through a different division of the words אֱלֹהִים צִוָּה into אֱלֹהֵי בַּצִּוָּה; for "at the sea" (Ps. cvi. 7), the Septuagint has *ἀναβαίνοντες*, *they went up*, joining the two words (עַל יָם) into one (עַל יָם); for "I tell thee" (1 Chron. xvii. 10), the Septuagint has *καὶ αὐξήσω σε*, *and I will increase thee*, joining the two words of the text (וְאָגִיד לְךָ) into one (וְאָגִיד לְךָ).<sup>1</sup> *ii.* The ancient practice of the Jews to write a certain number of consonants on one line, and not to allow the succeeding lines to contain one consonant more or less than the first, precludes the separation of words. *iii.* Among all nations of antiquity who wrote continuously, it can surely not be supposed that the Hebrews formed a solitary exception.<sup>2</sup>

Now the Moabite Stone sets aside all these objections. In this lapidary document, which is the most ancient specimen of alphabetical writing as yet discovered, and whose language approximates to the Hebrew far more closely than the Phœnician, not only are the words divided by points, but the text itself is divided into verses by vertical strokes. It is therefore only reasonable to assume that the Hebrews, who were closely allied to the Moabites, and whose language, in spite of all the changes to which it was subject in the course of time, is still almost identical with that of the Inscription, would make no exception to their mode of writing, but, like their kindred in race and speech, had the same system of punctuation. The Massoretic division of words is therefore, as a whole, in accordance with the faithfully preserved ancient system exhibited in the Synagogue Scrolls, which exclude the vowel points because of their modern origin, but include the verbal division because of its antiquity, as is now confirmed by the Moabite Stone. It was at a later period, about the time of the Septuagint translators, when the Jews began to evolve seventy different meanings from each utterance in the Scriptures, that the exegetical rule obtained in the Schools to rejoin and redivide every word, so as to make it say whatever was wanted. The Law, being deemed more sacred than the Prophets and the Hagiographa, was to some extent spared this process. Hence the very few redivisions of words in the Greek translation of the Pentateuch, and the large number in the other portions of the Hebrew Scriptures.<sup>3</sup>

The next point upon which the Moabite Stone throws light is the *scriptio plena* and *defectiva* in the Massoretic text of the Hebrew Scriptures. Before the present system of vowel-points was developed, certain feeble consonants were employed to indicate the vowel sounds. Thus *Aleph* (א) and *He* (ה) represent A; the latter, in older compositions, also expresses O; *Vaw* (ו) represents U and O, whilst *Yod* (י) represents I and E. As these vowel consonants, or *matres lectionis*, as they are technically called (forming the mnemonic sign אָהֵי *Ehevi*), are sometimes omitted altogether, their presence and absence, especially in the case of *Vaw* and *Yod*, are termed *scriptio plena* and *scriptio defectiva*. From the fact that the use of these *matres lectionis* depended in some measure upon the option of the writer, that the defective form is more frequent in the earlier books and the full form in the later books of the Hebrew Scriptures, and that a very large proportion of the Various Readings collected by Kennicott, De Rossi, &c., consists of plenes and defectives, some critics have concluded that these letters, whenever they indicate a vowel, did not at all exist in the primitive text of the Hebrew Bible, and that they were introduced at a later period by the Scribes and Massorites, as is the case in the cognate Phœnician, where these vowel-letters were also introduced at a later period (Comp. Schröder, *Die Phönizische Sprache*, § 29.) The Moabite Stone enables us now to determine this question.

In the Moabite Stone, as in the Hebrew Scriptures, *Aleph* (א) and *He* (ה) are written out (*scriptio plena*) to express the A sound at the end of a word: *e.g.* מֵה רְבָא *Medeba* (line 8), לַיְלָה *night* (line 15), and קֶרְחָה *Korcha* (lines 3, 21, 24, 25).

<sup>1</sup> For other instances, see Eichhorn, *Einleitung in das Alte Testament*, vol. i., § 73, p. 250, &c., Göttingen, 1823; Frankel, *Vorstudien zu der Septuaginta*, p. 216. Leipzig, 1841.

<sup>2</sup> Comp. Eichhorn, *ibid.*, vol. i., pp. 248–255.

<sup>3</sup> Comp. Kitto, *Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature*, s. v. MIDRASH.

Indeed, M. Ganneau maintains that the *He* (ה) in the first part of *מה דבא Medeba*, and in *נבה Nebo*, expresses in both instances the A sound, and not O. Even when *Aleph* is quiescent in the middle of a word, it is still plene; e.g. *זאת this* (line 3), whereas in Phœnician it is *זת*, without *Aleph* (Comp. Schröder, § 58); *מאתן two hundred* (line 20).

Very remarkable is the uniform use of *He* (ה) in the Moabite Stone to express the final O. Whether in *מה דבא Medeba*, and *נבה Nebo*, it expresses A, as M. Ganneau asserts, or O as Schlottmann and Nöldeke maintain, it is perfectly certain that throughout the Inscription ה- = O, invariably stands for ו- = O, as the suffix third person singular masculine. Compare *בה in him*, Hebrew *בו* (line 7); *בנה his son*, Hebrew *בנו* (line 6); *ביתו his house*, Hebrew *ביתו* (lines 7, 25); *ויחלפו and he succeeded him*, Hebrew *ויחלפו* (line 6). Remnants of this orthography have survived in the Old Testament, in three proper names: *i.* In *נכה Pharaoh-necho* (2 Kings xxiii. 29, 33, 35), which in Jeremiah (xlv. 2) is already altered into the later and more uniform orthography, *נכו* with *Vav*. *ii.* In the name *שלה Shilo*, the partial re-spelling of which, to conform it to the later mode of writing, is the cause of great confusion both in the MSS. and editions. This name, which occurs thirty-one times is, according to the Massorah on Gen. xlix. 10, written 8 times only *שלו* with *Vav*, thus following the more modern orthography (viz., Judg. xxi. 19; 1 Sam. i. 24; iii. 21; xiv. 3; Jerem. vii. 14; xxvi. 9; xli. 5; Ps. lxxviii. 59); whilst in all the rest, that is in twenty-three instances, it is *שלה*, retaining the more ancient spelling (viz., Gen. xlix. 19; Josh. xviii. 1, 9, 10; xix. 51; xxi. 2; xxii. 9, 12; Judg. xviii. 31; xxi. 12, 21 twice; 1 Sam. i. 3, 9; ii. 14; iii. 21; iv. 3, 4, 12; 1 Kings ii. 27; xiv. 4; Jerem. xxvi. 6). Now 1 Sam. xiv. 3, which according to the Massorah is *שלו*, the more modern form, is in the printed editions *שלה*, according to the more ancient orthography; whereas in three instances, where the editions have *שלו*, with *Vav* (Judg. xxi. 21, 21; Jerem. vii. 12), the Massorah has the old spelling *שלה* with ה *He*. The inconsistency in spelling, to which this partial attempt to modernise the ה- into ו- has given rise, may be seen in Jeremiah xxvi, where it is *שלה*, the more ancient form, in verse 6, and *שלו*, the more modern in verse 9; and still more glaringly in 1 Sam. iii. 21, where the two modes of spelling it occur in the same verse. And *iii.*, it is preserved in the name *שלמה Solomon*, which alone has escaped correction.

Even ה-, as suffix third person masculine, has also survived in the Hebrew Scriptures by an oversight on the part of those redactors who introduced the more modern and uniform orthography: e.g., *בה in it* (Jerem. xvii. 24; Ezek. xiv. 4); *אהלה his tent*, which occurs four times (Gen. ix. 21; xii. 8; xiii. 3; xxxv. 21); *בעירה his beast* (Exod. xxii. 4); *נכותה his covering* (Exod. xxii. 26); *נספה his drink offering* (Lev. xxiii. 13); *סותה his garments* (Gen. xlix. 11); *עירה his foal* (Gen. xlix. 11). It is interesting to see how the later redactors of the Scriptures, or the Massorites, who discovered these irregularities according to more modern orthography, but who felt that they no longer possessed the authority to introduce changes into the text, corrected all these instances in the margin of the Codex by what is called *Keri* (קרי), which is to be found in the glosses appended to all the modern printed editions of the Hebrew Bible. There is indeed no Massoretic remark on *אהלה his tent*, in the editions. But this is one of the many instances which show the arbitrary manner in which modern editors acted, in the selection of the notes which they introduced into the margin, since the Massorah distinctly declares (ואהלה ר' כתיב ה' וקריין ו') "it is four times written with *He*, but must be read with *Vav*," and the MSS. of the Bible with the Massorah always indicate the correction in the margin.

In the Moabite Stone, moreover, as in the Hebrew Bible, *Vav* (ו) is used to express U and O. Thus in *עשי make ye* (line 24), in Phœnician the Imperative plural is without *Vav*. *אשתח ditch* (line 9), and *חורנן Horonaim*, we have the *scriptio plena* of the U and O. It is true that it may be questioned whether the *Vav* in these words is the *scriptio plena* indicating the vowels U and O. Indeed the fact that *חורנן Horonaim*, which occurs four times in the Hebrew Bible, is defective (comp. Isa. xv. 5; Jerem. xlviii. 3, 5, 34), might at first seem to favour the view that it is to be pronounced *חורנן* (comp. *חורן* Ezek. xlvii. 16, 18). But unless some other proof be forthcoming, we cannot accept the present Hebrew spelling as decisive against the orthography of the Moabite Stone, especially, as we shall presently see, when the *scriptio plena* is used in other words in this Inscription.

In the Moabite Stone, as in the Hebrew Bible, *Yod* (י) is used to represent I and E. That I at the end of a substantive, denoting the suffix first person singular, was always expressed by *Yod*, and could therefore not be a Massoretic

importation, we knew from etymological reasons, and from its frequent occurrence in Phœnician (Comp. Schröder, § 45). Hence אָבִי *my father* (lines 2, 3), בִּימֵי *in my days* (lines 6, 9, 33), and שֹׁנְאֵי *my enemies* (line 4), cannot be adduced as throwing light upon the use of the *scriptio plena*. What we do learn from this Inscription is, that in the Moabite dialect, as in Biblical Hebrew, the verbal suffix *ni* (the accusative) is invariably written plene (Comp. הִשְׁעֵנִי *he saved me*, הִרְאֵנִי *he showed me*, line 4); whereas in Phœnician it is uniformly written *n* defective (Comp. Schröder, § 46). The same is the case with the affirmative of the first person singular perfect; *ti*, which is always defective (ת) in Phœnician (Comp. Schröder, § 96), is regularly plene in the Moabite Stone, just as in the Massoretic text. Thus בִּנְתִּי *I built* (lines 21, 22, 23, 26, 27), יִסְפַּתִּי *I added* (line 29), כָּרַתִּי *I dug* (line 25), מָלַכְתִּי *I reigned* (line 2—3), עָשִׂתִּי *I made* (lines 25, 26). The same is the case with the conjunction כִּי *for, because* (lines 4, 5, 17, 27, 28), which is without *Yod* in the Phœnician (Comp. Schröder, § 132).

When this vowel sound, however, occurs in the middle of the word, the *Yod* is omitted, as in Phœnician. Thus בְּנִתִּי, which occurs seven times, is defective of the *Yod* in the middle; whilst in the Scriptures, where it occurs fourteen times (1 Kings viii. 13, 27, 43, 44, 41; xi. 31; 2 Chron. vi. 2, 18, 33, 38; Neh. vi. 1; Eccles. ii. 4; Ezek. xxxvi. 36), and four times with *Vav conjunctive* (1 Sam. ii. 35; 1 Kings xi. 38; Jerem. xlii. 10; Ps. lxxxix. 5), it is וּבְנִתִּי, בְּנִתִּי always with the first *Yod* plene. The same is the case with עָשִׂתִּי *I made*, which occurs twice, both times with *Yod* defective in the middle; whilst in the Hebrew Scriptures, where it occurs seventy-six times, and nineteen times with *Vav conjunctive*, it is written וְעָשִׂתִּי, עָשִׂתִּי with *Yod* plene in the middle, except once וְעָשִׂתִּי (2 Sam. vii. 9), which seems to show that in Hebrew, as in Moabite, the *I* in the middle of words was sometimes defective, though not frequently. So also אִשׁ *man*, which occurs four times (lines 10, 13, 20), is defective, whilst in the Bible it is uniformly plene; and קִיר *wall*, which occurs four times (lines 11, 12, 24), is defective, whereas in the Hebrew Scriptures it is plene; except once (Isa. xii. 5) which again seems to be a remnant of the older mode of writing the *I* in the middle of words defective. Moreover, the *Yod* is uniformly defective in the plurals. Thus אֲלָפִין *thousands* (line 16), אַרְבָּעִין *forty* (line 8), יָמִין *days* (line 5), יַעֲרִין *forests* (line 21), רַבִּין *many* (line 5), שָׁלֹשִׁין *despoilers* (line 4), שְׁלֹשִׁין *thirty* (line 2), just as in the Phœnician (Comp. Schröder, § 75). Still more striking is the absence of the *Yod* in the five duals which occur in this Inscription, viz., דִּבְלַתַּיִם *Diblathaim* (line 30), חֹרֶנַיִם *Horonaim* (lines 31, 32), מֵאתַיִם *two hundred* (line 23), צַהֲרַיִם *noon* (line 15), and קִרְיַתַּיִם *Kirjathaim* (line 10).

Still the *I* is expressed in the middle of words in רֵית *well-pleasing* (line 12), and in דִּיבֹן *Dibon* (line 2), where it is a patronymic, and 21, 28). The Greek spelling of the latter, viz., Δαῖβων *Daibon*, Δηβύς *Debus*, would seem to indicate that it was pronounced דִּיבֹן or דִּיבֵן with audible *Yod*. But the notoriously uncertain and unreliable manner in which Hebrew words were reproduced in Greek characters is against its fixing the pronunciation of the original. Besides, the Bedouins themselves, who are the descendants of the Moabites, to the present day pronounce it *Dhiban*.

The use of the *scriptio plena* and *scriptio defectiva* in the *E* sound, the second vowel represented by *Yod*, also approximates very closely to that of the Massoretic Hebrew text. Thus at the end of the word, *E* is plene; compare לִפְנֵי *before* (lines 13, 18), which is written לִפְנֵי defective in Phœnician (comp. Schröder, § 29), and כְּלָאֵי *prisons of* (line 23). Even in the middle of the word, *E* is sometimes also plene, as in בֵּיתָהּ *in his house* (line 25), though in line 7 it is בֵּיתָה defective (as well as בֵּית, lines 23, 27, 30); and in שַׁעֲרֶיהָ *its gates* (line 22), which is all the more remarkable since it is often omitted in Hebrew (comp. Gesenius, § 91; Ewald, § 259). In מְגִדְלָתָהּ (line 22), however, the *Yod* is omitted (comp. Ruth ii. 13). On the other hand, אֵן *not* (line 24), is defective, whilst in the Hebrew Scriptures it is uniformly plene. מִשַּׁע *Mesha* (line 1), is defective; and in the Old Testament, where this proper name occurs twice (2 Kings iii. 4; 1 Chron. ii. 42), it is both times plene.

The light, therefore, which the orthography of the Moabite Stone throws upon the orthography of the Massoretic text, is that the vowels were from the remotest antiquity represented in Hebrew by the consonants אָהוּ, which are now used in the Massoretic text, and whose feeble consonant sounds have a close affinity with the vowels which they express; that at the end of a word the vowel letter, or the *scriptio plena*, was always used to express the vowel wherever it is employed in the Massoretic text; that in this respect the Moabite dialect fully harmonises with the Massoretic system, and entirely differs from the Phœnician; that the *scriptio plena* was used very sparingly in the middle of words both in the Moabite and in



Hebrew; that the latter extended the use of it in the course of time, when the language was more developed, and that in Hebrew, as in the Moabite, ה *He* was originally and uniformly used to express O at the end of the word, and that this consonant was afterwards supplanted by *Vav*.

In the forms of the different parts of speech, the Moabite Stone, too, approaches more closely to the Hebrew than the Phœnician does.

Of the Personal or Separate Pronouns we have only two, but both of them are very instructive, viz., אנך the first person singular, which is spelt in exactly the same way as in Phœnician, and הֵא. This pronoun, which occurs twice (lines 6, 27), is used in the Inscription, as in the Pentateuch, for both the masculine and feminine. Whether it was epicene in the earlier periods of the Hebrew language, as Gesenius (*Grammar*, § 32, 6) and Ewald (*Lehrbuch*, § 184) assert, like נִעַר, which is feminine in twenty-one instances in the Pentateuch (Gen. xxiv. 14, 16, 28, 55, 57; xxxiv. 3, 12; Deut. xii. 15, 16, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29); or whether there was a slight variation in its pronunciation for the different genders, as Böttcher (*Lehrbuch*, § 860) maintains, this much is evident, that in the Moabite Stone, as in the archaic Hebrew, this Personal Pronoun is spelt exactly the same when used for the masculine and the feminine.\* Only one instance of the Demonstrative Pronoun זאת *this*, fem. singular (line 3), occurs in the whole of the Inscription. But even this solitary instance shows how closely allied the Moabite is to the Hebrew, inasmuch as in Phœnician it is ז (Comp. Schröder § 58). We have, moreover, also one instance of the Pronoun אשר (line 29), which is exactly as the Hebrew, whilst in Phœnician it is אש, or simply ש (Comp. Schröder, § 65).

In the forms which mark the gender of Nouns, the feminine singular ending is simply the original ת־ as in Phœnician (Comp. Schröder § 73), and not ה־ as in Hebrew; e.g. בַּמֶּת *pillar* (line 3), Hebrew בִּמְה (1 Kings xi. 7; Jerem. xlvi. 35; Ezek. xx. 29); מַסְלַת *road* (line 26), Hebrew מַסְלָה (Isa. xi. 16, xxix. 23, xl. 3), מַחֲרַת *dawn* (line 15). This primitive termination is still preserved in Biblical Hebrew, in proper names of — (a) Places, e.g. אֵילַת *Elath* (Deut. ii. 8, &c.); בֹּשֶׁת *Boskath* (Josh. xv. 39, &c.) (b.) Persons masculine, e.g. אֲחֻזַּת *Ahuzzeth* (Gen. xxvi. 26); גִּלְיָת *Goliath* (1 Sam. xvii. 4, &c.); feminine, בִּשְׁמַת *Basmath* (Gen. xxvi. 34, &c.); מַחֲלַת *Mahalath* (Gen. xxviii. 9, &c.), and other objects (Comp. Gesenius, § 80, 2; Böttcher, *Lehrbuch*, i. § 615). A very remarkable feature in so early a document is the form of the plural masculine י־ instead of ס־ both in the Nouns and Numerals, e.g. יָמִים *days* (line 5); יַעֲרֵי *forests* (line 21); רַבִּי *many* (line 5); שְׁלֹכִי *despoilers* (line 4), and the following Numerals; אֲלָפִי *thousands* (line 16); אַרְבָּעִי *forty* (line 8); and שְׁלֹשִׁי *thirty* (line 2), since it has hitherto been supposed that it is an Aramaic termination, which has crept into Hebrew at a later period of the language. (Comp. Ezek. iii. 12; Dan. xii. 13; Gesenius, § 87 a; Ewald § 177.) The same termination is to be found in the dual, of which we have four instances; viz., דְּבַלְתַּי *Diblathaim* (line 30); חֹרֶנִי *Horonaim* (lines 31, 32); מֵאֵתַי *two hundred* (line 20); קִרְיַתַּי *Kirjathaim* (line 10). Remnants of this ancient ending we have in the Hebrew Scriptures, chiefly in proper names; e.g. דֹּתַי *Dothan* (*two wells*) = דֹּתַי *Dothain* (2 Kings vi. 12); קָרְתַּי *Kartan* (*two cities*) = קִרְיַתַּי *Kirjathaim* (Josh. xxi. 32); Comp. Gesenius, § 88, 1; Ewald, § 180 c; Böttcher i. § 678 1). This form, too, which has hitherto been regarded as a later Aramaic development in the Old Testament, receives elucidation from the Moabite Stone. The Dual termination ס־ in צִהֶרֶם *noon* (line 15), if the present deciphering of the Stone be correct, forms a solitary exception in the diction of the Inscription. No special dual form has as yet been found in the Phœnician inscriptions (Comp. Schröder, § 77.) In the nine nouns, both singular and plural, with Pronominal Suffixes, which occur in the Moabite Stone, we have examples of the first and second persons, both singular and plural, but not one instance of the singular and plural suffixes. They are as follows: Singular first person common אֲבִי *my father* (line 2); third person masculine אֲרָצָה *his land* (lines 5, 6); בֵּיתָה *his house* (lines 7, 25); רָשָׁה

\* The only eleven instances in the Pentateuch in which a distinction is made in the spelling of this Pronoun, when it refers to the feminine gender by writing it הֵא with *Yod*, instead of the usual הֵא with *Vav* (Gen. xiv. 2; xx. 5; xxxviii. 25; Levit. xi. 39; xiii. 10, 21; xvi. 31; xx. 17; xi. 9; Numb. v. 13, 14), are emendations of late redactors, who attempted to make the orthography of the Pentateuch uniform with the developed state of the language. The Massorites have carefully registered this anomaly (Comp. *Massorah on Gen. xxxviii. 25, Ochlā Ve-ochlā*, Halle Codex, i. § 131). Throughout the later books of the Hebrew Scriptures, the ancient Scribes have successfully secured uniformity except in eight instances, duly marked by the Massorah, according to which הֵא has been left five times for הֵא (Ps. lxxiii. 16; Eccl. v. 8; 1 Kings xvii. 15; Job xxxi. 11; 1 Ch. xxix. 16); and *vice versa*, הֵא has been left three times for הֵא (1 Kings xvii. 5; Isa. xxx. 33; Job xxxi. 11). The list of these eight instances is given in the *Massorah on Ps. lxxiii. 16, and Ochlā Ve-ochlā*, Halle Codex, i. § 132.

*its poor* (line 20); plural Nouns with suffix, first person singular יָמֵי *my days* (lines 9, 33; שָׁנָי *my enemies* (line 4); third person singular feminine מִגְדָּלֶיהָ *her towers*, שַׁעְרֶיהָ *her gates* (line 22). It will be seen from these forms that they are exactly as in Hebrew, whilst they are different in the Phœnician.

In the modifications of the verb containing the word-stem, we have no great variety of examples in the Moabite Stone. Students of Hebrew know that there are six ordinary conjugations, or verbal derivatives, formed from the first conjugation called *Kal*, which are respectively denominated *Niphal*, *Piel*, *Pual*, *Hiphil*, *Hophal*, and *Hithpael*, thus making in all seven; and that of the *Kal* which expresses the simple active verb (*e.g. to love*), the *Niphal* is the reflective (*to love oneself*); that the *Piel* is intensity and repetition (*to love ardently or frequently*), the passive thereof is the *Pual* (*to be loved ardently or intensely*); the causative is the *Hiphil* (*to cause to love*), the passive thereof is the *Hophal* (*to be caused to love*); and that the reflective is *Hithpael* (*to make oneself loved*).\* All these seven conjugations may be developed in any verb, either by varying its vowels, by doubling a letter, or by adding formative letters or syllables. Now in all the twenty-six verbs or word-stems, which occur in the Moabite Stone, we have two only of these seven conjugations represented, namely, the *Kal*, or the primitive verb, and the *Hiphil*. And even these two conjugations are by no means equally represented. Thus, one and twenty out of the entire twenty-six word-stems occur in one or more tenses of the *Kal*, whilst four only occur in the *Hiphil*; two verbs alone occurring both in the *Kal* and *Hiphil*, viz., יִשֵּׁב (line 31, with 13): רָאָה (line 7, with 4). The formation of this *Hiphil*, however, shows how closely the Moabite approximates to the Hebrew. Whilst in Phœnician the preformative is *Yod* (comp. Schröder, § 91), and in Aramaic and Arabic *Aleph*, and in the last-mentioned dialects only very rarely *He*, the Moabite הִרְאֵנִי (line 4) is exactly like the Hebrew. But whilst two only of the regular conjugations occur in the whole of the Inscription, we meet here in וְאֶלְתָּחֶם *and I fought*, the imperfect, with *Vav* conversive (lines 11, 15); בְּהִלָּתַחֲמָהּ *in his fighting*, the infinitive with the suffix (line 19); and in הִלָּתַחֲמָהּ *fight*, the imperative (line 32), the *Hiphthael*, which does not occur in the Hebrew Scriptures, but which is the eighth conjugation in Arabic. In Hebrew and Aramaic, the *Tav* is regularly the formative, and is only then placed after the first radical when it is a sibilant. The appearance therefore, of this form in so early a document shows how anciently the different Semitic dialects merged into one another. Whether רָאָה *he was angry* (in line 5), exhibits the *Tipheh* or *Tiphal*, the fifth or six Arabic Conjugation, as Geiger and Schlottmann suggest, is not certain, since, as the former scholar rightly remarks, it may be an abbreviation of הִרְאֵנִי, the *Hithpael*, which is the normal form in Hebrew in such a phrase. (Comp. Deut. i. 37; iv. 21; ix. 20.)

In the Particles, too, the Moabite is identical with the Hebrew, and differs from the Phœnician. *i. ADVERBS.* Thus, שָׁם *there*, which occurs twice (lines 12, 30) in this short inscription, and which is common in Hebrew, is supposed not as yet to have been found in the Phœnician Epigraphic documents (Comp. Nöldeke, *Die Inschrift des Königs Mesa*, p. 31, with Schröder, § 116); אֵין *not* (line 24), Hebrew אֵין is in Phœnician אֵי (Comp. Schröder § 116); מִעַלְמָם *from of old* (line 10), is the same in all these Semitic dialects. *ii. PREPOSITIONS.* אַחֲרֵי *after* (line 3); עַד *until* (line 15); עַל *upon* (lines 2, 14, 21, 29), are the same; but לִפְנֵי *before* (lines 13, 18), is in Phœnician פִּנֵּי. Of Prefix Prepositions, ב *in*, ל *to*, and כ *as*, we have only ב *in*, *at*, *on* (lines 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 19, 20, 24 twice, 25, 26), and ל (lines 3, 12 twice, 17, 24, 25). כ does not occur. אֵת occurs in lines 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11 twice, 13 twice, 14, 29, 30. In ancient Phœnician it is always אֵית, with two exceptions (Comp. Schröder, § 123). Of Prepositions with Suffixes, we have לִי *to me* (line 14); לָהּ *to him* (line 10); לָכֶם *to you* (lines 24, 25); בִּי *in me, against me* (line 19), בֵּה; common gender (7, 8, 9 twice, 13, 15, 19, 31). *iii. IN CONJUNCTIONS*, we have, besides the ordinary ו *and*, which is of frequent occurrence, כִּי *for, because* (lines 4 twice, 5, 17, 27 twice, 28. In Phœnician, it is כ (Comp. Schröder, § 132.)

The Syntax is exactly that of the Hebrew, and differs materially from the Phœnician. Thus the article, which is so seldom used in the Phœnician (Comp. Schröder, § 63), occurs no less than fifteen times in this short and mutilated Inscription, viz., lines 1, 3, 4, 9, 12, 15, 21, 22, 23, 24 twice, 25, 26, 29, 31, not including those instances in which it is dropped by

\* The English renderings must not be taken as exact equivalents to the signification of these different conjugations in the Hebrew, but simply as approximate. They are the nearest illustrations we could find to convey the original. For a more minute and accurate treatment of this subject, we must refer to Gesenius' *Grammar*, §§ 38–54.

contraction, in consequence of the prepositions  $\text{א}$  and  $\text{ל}$ . In the numerals, where the Phœnician differs so essentially from the Hebrew (Comp. Schröder, § 85), the Moabite entirely agrees with the Hebrew (Comp. lines 3, 8, 16, 20). The use of *Vaw* conversive, with the future or the imperfect, to express the preterite in a continued narration, which has hitherto been believed to be peculiar to the Hebrew Bible, is not only to be found throughout the Moabite Stone but it is even employed with apocopate forms which do not exist in the Old Testament, *e.g.*  $\text{וַיִּבְנֶה}$  and *I built* (line 9). When we add that the whole vocabulary of the Moabite Stone is to be found in the Hebrew Scriptures, as will be seen at the end of this Essay; and that certain shades of meaning, attached to different words in this Inscription, are real acquisitions to Hebrew Lexicography, the importance of it to the language of the Old Testament cannot be overrated. It is not too much to say that every Hebrew grammarian and lexicographer will henceforth appeal to the language of the Moabite Stone for the elucidation of certain forms and phrases, the exact date of which has hitherto been unknown.

IV. We now come to the *Palæographical importance* of the Moabite Stone. In this respect, this Triumphal Tablet is perfectly peerless, inasmuch as we here obtain an alphabet which is more than a century and a half older than that in any other Epigraphic document containing the same species of writing; and it is three centuries older than the Sarcophagus of Eshmunazar, which has hitherto been considered the most ancient inscription of any considerable length. The characters of the Moabite Stone are "Phœnician," as they are generally called, from the supposed fact that the Phœnicians invented them, or that they were peculiar to them. As it is from this alphabet that the Greek, the Roman, and all the other European alphabets are derived, we have before us the veritable prototype of modern writing, and the very characters which, before 700 B.C., were common, as Count de Vogüé has shown, to all the races of Western Asia, from Egypt to the foot of the Taurus, and from the Mediterranean to Nineveh, and which were used in Nineveh itself, in Phœnicia, Jerusalem, Samaria, the land of Moab, Cilicia, and Cyprus.

The first palæographical point on which the Moabite Stone throws light is the number of letters contained in the ancient alphabet, from which the Greek characters were derived. Herodotus, who gives the first notice about the origin of the Greek alphabet, simply states, that the Phœnicians who came with Cadmus introduced among the Greeks many kinds of useful knowledge, and particularly letters; and hence this historian calls them *Καδμήια γράμματα* *Cadmean characters* (Herodotus, v. 58). Nothing is here said about their number. Pliny, however, who also records this story, distinctly declares that the alphabet brought by Cadmus from Phœnicia originally consisted of 16 letters, viz. *A, B, Γ, Δ, E, I, K, Λ, M, N, O, Π, P, Σ, T* and *Τ*; that Palamedes, at the time of the Trojan war, added four letters, viz., *Θ, Ξ, Φ* and *Χ*; and that Simonides, the lyric poet, afterwards added a like number, *Z, H, Ψ* and *Ω*; but that according to Aristotle, there were originally eighteen letters, *A, B, Γ, Δ, E, Z, I, K, Λ, M, N, O, Π, P, Σ, T, Τ, Φ*, and that two letters, viz., *Θ, Χ*, were introduced by Epicharmus, and not by Palamedes (Pliny vii. 57). Hence Dr. Donaldson (*The New Cratylus*, p. 170, etc., 3rd ed. London, 1859), and others, conclude "that the original Semitic alphabet contained only sixteen letters." The oldest evidence which could hitherto be adduced that it contained twenty-two letters, as at present, was derived from the alphabetical Psalms and Poems (viz., Pss. xxv. xxxiv., xxxvii., cxi., cxii., cxix., cxlv.; Prov. xxxi. 10—31; Lament. i.—iv.). As the initial letter of each verse, period, or stanza, in these poetical compositions, follows the order of the alphabet, thus forming an alphabetical acrostic; and as the alphabet thus exhibited contains the same number and order of characters, it has naturally and justly been urged that the ancient alphabet had twenty-two letters, as at present. To this, however, some palæographers have replied, that these artificial compositions are of a later or post-Babylonian date, or that they were acrostically recast at the time when the additional characters had already become generally used, in order to assist the memory (*circa* 400—450 B.C.), and that they can therefore not be adduced to prove the antiquity of all the twenty-two letters. Now in the Moabite Stone we have an alphabet at least 900—1000 years before Christ. Indeed as the age of the Stone itself is about 900 B.C., and as no rational being can maintain that its characters were then invented for the first time for this public document, it is evident that they must have been used by the Moabites, and the other Semitic nations long before this period. We are therefore within bounds when we assign to them the date of 950—1000 B.C. Here then

we have not only five of the letters, viz., *Z*, *H*, *Θ*, and *Σ*,<sup>1</sup> which are said to have been added afterwards by Palamedes, Simonides, and Epicharmus; and the *ϱ* *Koppa* of the ancient Greek alphabet, but all the twenty-two letters. As it is not even probable that the Greeks obtained their alphabet prior to 1000 B.C., the Moabite Stone proves to demonstration that the ancient Semitic alphabet contained twenty-two letters, and that they were altogether taken over by the Greeks.

Still more remarkable is the light which the Moabite Stone throws on the original forms of the Greek alphabet. On comparing the archaic Greek characters on the earliest Inscriptions with those on the Moabite Stone, it will at once be seen that we have actually before us the primary source from which they are derived, and that most of the Greek characters are not only similar to, but identical with, those on the Stone. Passing over those letters which are alike in the archaic Greek, the ordinary Phœnician, in the Inscription of Eshmunazar (*circa* 600 B.C.), in the alphabet of the Assyrian Tablets and Gems (*circa* 650—750 B.C.), and of the Moabite Stone, we shall confine our attention to those only which are allied to the characters on the Stone.

The early Greek *Delta* is simply a triangle, which is usually its form on the Stone, whilst on the Inscription of Eshmunazar, both the left angle is rounded and a shaft descends at the right. In the Assyrian again, the head is open, and though the left angle is not rounded in some of the Phœnician Inscriptions, yet all without exception, have this right arm descending below the point of junction. This shaft, which must have been appended very soon after the Triumphal Stone was erected, as incipient traces of it seem already observable in some of the *Daleths* in the Stone itself, has been the cause of incalculable mischief, inasmuch as it has given rise to the deplorable similarity between *Daleth* *ד* and *Resh* *ר*. The original of the *Daleth*, therefore, being alone found in the Moabite Stone and the archaic Greek, proves, beyond doubt, that the latter was derived directly from the former.

The same is the case with the archaic form of the Greek *bau* (*Βαυ* pronounced *Vau*) which is *Y* or *V*, and the direct source of which we now see for the first time in the Moabite *ϣ*, since neither in the Inscription of Eshmunazar nor in the Assyrian alphabet is the perpendicular line in the middle of the semi-circle.

What is however more important still, is the fact that the archaic Greek *Xi*, which consists of a perpendicular line crossed by three bars *⚡* and which Simonides is said to have invented (530 B.C.), has its absolute identity in the Moabite *Samech*. Even the Assyrian *Samech*, which approaches more closely to the Moabite, its evident prototype, is entirely put out of court at sight of the one on the Stone, whose very appearance proclaims its immediate paternity of the Greek *Xi*. Exactly the same is the case with the Greek *Koppa* *ϱ*, the Latin *Q*. In the ordinary Phœnician alphabet no prototype could hitherto be found; and even in the Assyrian type, which resembles the Greek, the vertical line reaches the top of the circle *Φ*, whilst in the Moabite Stone it is absolutely identical.

But although the Moabite Stone gives us for the first time the identical shapes of the letters which were incorporated into the Greek alphabet, still we are not prepared to endorse the conclusion of Professor Rawlinson, that therefore the alphabet passed over to the Greeks about 900 B.C.<sup>2</sup> For though it is perfectly true that the forms of the letters in question could not have been derived from the Phœnician or Assyrian of 750 B.C., which have hitherto become known, it is hazardous to assume that the forms found in the alphabets of 750 B.C. had universally supplanted those of 900 B.C. An inspection of the *fac-similes* of the ancient Inscriptions will show that different districts developed different shapes, which obtained and maintained themselves simultaneously. Some epigraphic documents may still turn up, which will show that the peculiar forms which appear for the first time on the Moabite Stone (900 B.C.), have preserved their existence in some localities beyond the time of Homer and Hesiod (about 850—776 B.C.), and that they may have been introduced into Greece about the period of the first Olympiad, as is believed by Mr. Grote and many other scholars.

<sup>1</sup> Though it is greatly to be deplored that the *Teth* has disappeared from the text, yet there can hardly be any doubt that it did originally occur on the Stone in the word *Ataroth*, in line 11, of the Inscription. We are perplexed to understand what Professor Rawlinson means by his remark, that *Teth* is "not very common in Hebrew" (*Contemporary Review*, Ap. 1870, p. 105), seeing that it occurs 11,052 times in the Hebrew Scriptures (comp. Ginsburg: *The Massoreth Ha-Massoreth* of Lévi, p. 273).

<sup>2</sup> *The Contemporary Review*, p. 109, &c., Aug. 1870.

## VI. LITERATURE ON THE MOABITE STONE.

From the first day in which the discovery of the Moabite Stone was announced by Count de Vogüé, all the leading Journals have teemed with notices of this extraordinary find. To give a detailed account of these multi-lingual and to a great extent ephemeral productions, even were it possible, would be of very questionable importance. In cataloguing, therefore, the literature of this remarkable Inscription, we shall restrict ourselves to those Essays from which we derived more or less benefit in the compilation of this Treatise.

It was on January 16, 1870, that M. Ganneau forwarded from Jerusalem to Count de Vogüé a short account of the Moabite Stone, which he claimed as his discovery, together with his first attempt to reconstruct the text, and a French translation. This de Vogüé published on the 5th of February, under the title, *La Stèle de Mesa Roi de Moab*, &c., Paris, 1870, with a short treatise of his own, and a *fac-simile* of the original, according to the then state of the reconstructed text. The indefatigable and erudite Mr. Grove at once called public attention to it in the *Times*, in a letter dated February 8; he published at the same time Deutsch's just estimate of it, which he had formed from the mutilated text and defective translation of M. Ganneau. On February 22, the *Times* published a Review of Count de Vogüé's Pamphlet, with the French version of the text. Hereupon appeared Deutsch's second letter in the *Times*, dated February 28, in which he pointed out some mistranslations of M. Ganneau, made some valuable suggestions as to the rendering of different words, adverted to the palæographical importance of the Inscription, and rightly urged that as the materials from which the text was to be restored were not then at the command of scholars, it was premature to handle the subject more systematically. M. Ganneau, misunderstanding the import of Deutsch's Letter, addressed himself to the *Times*, which printed his Letter March 22. Then followed another Letter from Deutsch, and one from Mr. Grove in the *Times*, March 23. The whole of this Correspondence, as well as two accounts of the discovery of the Moabite Stone, by Captain Warren, were published in the *Palestine Exploration Society's Quarterly Journal*, No. V.

In the March number of the *Revue Archéologique*, Count de Vogüé published a revised text of the Moabite Stone, forwarded to him by M. Ganneau, who continued his studies of the different materials he possessed. Several words, which defied his first attempts at deciphering, yielded to continued exertions, others were corrected, and the translation was improved. This improved edition is, moreover, followed by the first part of a Dissertation on the historical, palæographical, and linguistic bearing of the Inscription, to which the Editor subjoined several valuable notes; and is accompanied by a new *fac-simile* of the original.

In the mean time, M. Neubauer published a translation in German, with a few Notes in Frankel's *Monatsschrift* for April. But as this translation is based upon M. Ganneau's first edition, and as the Notes are very meagre, it cannot be said that this scholar contributed much to the elucidation of the text. Almost simultaneously with M. Neubauer's version, a very elaborate Treatise appeared at Halle, from the masterly pen of Professor Schlottmann. Several of his conjectures have since been verified; and even those, which further deciphering have set aside, are very instructive, and display the ingenuity of the masterly translator of, and commentator on, the Inscription of Eshmunazar. It is greatly to be regretted that he worked from the first and very much mutilated text. His translation is given at the end of this Essay. At the end of March, M. Neubauer delivered a Lecture at the Taylor Institution, Oxford, embodying an English version of the Inscription. As an abstract only of this Lecture was published, this learned Orientalist had not contributed much to the elucidation of the text. His version will be found at the end of this Treatise.

The Palestine Exploration Society made a valuable contribution to the criticism of the text, April 8, by the publication of a photographic sheet of Captain Warren's tracings of the two large Fragments, giving the duplicate of Fragment B. By this aid every scholar is enabled to compare M. Ganneau's casts, and the deciphering of them, with the independent transcript from the different squeezes of Captain Warren. The result of a collation of the two texts has already been given (See above, p. 15). At the same time, the learned Derenbourg published a French translation of the second edition of the text in the *Revue Israélite*, Paris, April 8. Though the Notes are very few, yet this erudite scholar has materially aided the understanding of some passages, both by his accurate verbal criticisms and his ingenious conjectures, which are duly noticed in their respective places. We have given his version at the end of this Essay.

Second to none of the contributions to the elucidation of the Moabite Stone, is the Treatise by Professor Nöldeke, *Die Inschrift des Königs Mesa*, Kiel, 1870. Like all the productions of this consummate Orientalist, his Essay is characterised by thoroughness, and a deep insight into the different shades of meaning. He does not hazard many conjectures to fill up the lacunæ; but among the few that he suggests is the *Dibonite*, in lines 1 and 2, which has since been confirmed by the Stone itself. In addition to the valuable geographical notes with which his Essay is enriched, he treats on the palæographical bearing of the Inscription. His translation is given at the end of this Treatise.

In a notice of M. Ganneau's second edition of the revised text, in the *Academy*, April 9, appears a criticism, by M. Neubauer, of Professor Schlottmann's Treatise. The exceptions which the critic takes to certain conjectures and interpretations, as well as his views of certain passages, are duly noticed in their respective places. On April 16, Professor Haug published a translation, with some notes, in the supplement to the *Allgemeine Zeitung*. It is a popular rendering of the Inscription, accompanied by some valuable notes. The translation is made from M. Ganneau's first edition, and is consequently defective, as may be seen at the end of this Essay. The *Athenæum*, of May 21, contains a letter from Professor Weir of Glasgow, from which we see that this scholar had also made the same conjecture about the *Dibonite* which Professor Nöldeke hazarded. Dr. Weir, moreover, makes some ingenious remarks on the forty years' subjugation of Moab by Omri, and his successors, which are noticed in the Commentary on line 8.

On June 1, M. Ganneau published, in the *Revue Archéologique*, the second part of his Commentary. Here, again, we see how this young *savant* laboriously and conscientiously prosecuted the study of the various materials in his possession. His efforts were rewarded by his obtaining several new and important readings. As he had, moreover, the valuable works of Schlottmann and Nöldeke, he derived from them a double advantage. He was enabled to test their conjectures, by seeing whether there were any traces of the letters in the squeezes, or whether they exactly filled up the lacunæ; whilst at the same time they aided him in deciphering partially faded words.

A very lucid and interesting review of the labours of Ganneau, Schlottmann, and Nöldeke appeared in the *Theologisches Literaturblatt*, Darmstadt, June 1, by Dr. Schröder. The reviewer, however, was not acquainted with M. Ganneau's last recension of the text.

But the most important contribution to the study of the Inscription is that published by Count de Vogüé, Paris, June, 1870. In this publication, the learned nobleman, to whom Semitic scholars are so largely indebted for his multifarious labours, gives us a reprint of M. Ganneau's revised translation, accompanied by the whole commentary, the last edition of the restored text, and a new fac-simile of the original.

It is greatly to be regretted that the erudite Geiger, who republished in the last number of the *Zeitschrift der Deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft* (vol. xxiv., parts i. and ii., pp. 212—226), M. Ganneau's second recension of the text, had not access to the last edition. Much of the value of Geiger's ingenious criticism is lost, through his not being in possession of the latest readings. The same number of the *Oriental Journal* brings us Schlottmann's revised text, according to M. Ganneau's second revision. And though his supplementary notes are very valuable, we have no doubt they would have been more so had he seen the third recension of the text.

The latest production on the Moabite Stone which we have seen, is that by Professor Rawlinson, in the August number of *The Contemporary Review*, pp. 97—112. It is almost entirely devoted to the palæographical importance of the Stone. However much we may differ from certain of his conclusions, no one can peruse the article without feeling that it is written by a master hand. That he should have underrated the historical value of the Stone, and entirely passed over the great light which it throws upon the language of the Scriptures, is really surprising.

Since the issue of the first edition of this Essay, several Treatises have appeared both in England and on the Continent. Of these the following have come to our knowledge, and been used in preparing this edition.

An interesting article by the Rev. William Hayes in the October number of the *Bibliotheca Sacra*, p. 625—646, with supplementary notes, p. 777, Andover, 1870. Mr. Hayes gives the Inscription in the ordinary Hebrew type with a translation and a running commentary. The translation will be found at the end of this Essay.

In the same month an article appeared in *Good Words* by Professor Weir of Glasgow. Though short and popular, it contains some valuable suggestions.

In the same month also appeared a very elaborate article on “the Moabite Inscription” in the *North British Review* from the pen, we believe, of Dr. Wright, late of the British Museum, now Professor of Arabic at Cambridge. The merits of this Treatise chiefly consist in the comparison which Dr. Wright institutes between the language of the Moabites and the cognate dialects, more especially the Arabic. Dr. Wright’s version will be found at the end of the Essay.

A rather remarkable contribution to the literature of the Moabite Stone has been made by Professor Kaempf of Prague (Prague, 1870). Though we believe that Kaempf has been too fanciful, and has striven too much to elucidate the language of this early document by the late Rabbinic dialect, yet much is to be learned from the perusal of his Treatise.

Still more remarkable and fanciful is Hitzig’s Essay on “the Inscription of Mesha” (Heidelberg, 1870). Like the work of Kaempf, Hitzig’s Treatise was finished before M. Ganneau’s last recension of the Moabite Stone reached him. The Professor had, however, time to notice it in the Appendix. But as he had already made up his mind upon certain matters with which the new readings did not harmonize, Hitzig, rather than give up his opinions, impugns and cavalierly rejects M. Ganneau’s latest results. Both Kaempf’s and Hitzig’s translations are given at the end of this Essay.

Dr. Geiger, who, as we have seen, re-published in Parts i. and ii. of the *Zeitschrift der Deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft* (1870), M. Ganneau’s second recension of the text with some ingenious criticisms, has since published in Part iii. of the same Journal, pp. 433—436, additional remarks upon M. Ganneau’s third recension.

Professor Schlottmann too has made additional important contributions to the elucidation of the Moabite Stone in the same number of the Journal (p. 438—460), in consequence of the new readings yielded by M. Ganneau’s last recension.

In Parts ii. and iii. of the *Jüdische Zeitschrift*, p. 104—118, (Breslau, 1870,) Geiger has re-published his Essay in a modified form, according to the last recension of the text.

The fourth Part of the *Zeitschrift der Deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft* brings the most important contribution to the History of the Discovery of the Moabite Stone by Dr. Petermann (pp. 640—644). As this is the first official report, we have given a literal translation of it in the chapter bearing upon this subject.

The same part of the Journal contains further contributions from Schlottmann to the interpretation of the Inscription (p. 645—680). This article is chiefly devoted to an elaborate disquisition on Ashtor-Chemosh, and to a searching examination of some of Hitzig’s fanciful views of the Moabite Stone.

The first part of the second volume of Merx’s *Archiv für wissenschaftliche Erforschung des Alten Testaments* (pp. 96—104, Halle, 1871,) has an article by Dr. Himpel on the Importance of the Inscription to the history of the Hebrew language and writing, which is well put together.

Two interesting articles on the Moabite Stone appeared in the *London Quarterly Review*, October, 1870, and in the *British and Foreign Evangelical Review*, February, 1871. The former gives, in a lucid and popular style, the results of the labours on the subject. The latter, which is signed by Professor Davidson, of Edinburgh, though

avowedly a Review of *The Recovery of Jerusalem*, a volume published by the *Palestine Exploration Society*, is chiefly devoted to the Inscription of Mesha. Dr. Davidson has not contributed anything to the elucidation of the text, which is all the more to be regretted, since the article is replete with Hebrew quotations. The only conjecture he hazarded to fill up a lacuna (line 7) is untenable.

In the very instructive volume, entitled *The Recovery of Jerusalem*, published by the *Palestine Exploration Society*, a chapter is devoted to the Moabite Stone. The Essay on the subject, according to the original design, was to have been contributed by Mr. Deutsch, but ill health prevented his writing it. This is all the more to be regretted, since he was not only the first who corrected some of M. Ganneau's mistranslations, and called attention to the importance of this lapidary document, but is one of the very few scholars in England who could do justice to this unparalleled relic. It would be cruel to criticise the article in *The Recovery of Jerusalem*, as the writer, who modestly withholds his name, was evidently pressed into the service to fill up the gap occasioned by Mr. Deutsch's illness. We should have thought that Mr. Morrison, the editor of the volume, would have requested M. Neubauer to write the article, seeing that he was the first man in England who attempted to give a consecutive version of the whole Inscription, and who has continually kept the British public informed of the different publications on the subject in the valuable Notices in the *Academy*.



# THE MOABITE STONE.

## PART I.

THE FIRST PART, 1—21 *a*, records the wars of Mesha with Omri, King of Israel, and his successors. Having given his own name and that of his father, as well as the duration of his paternal reign (1—3*a*), Mesha states that he erected this Monument to his national God, Chemosh, as a token of gratitude for the deliverance from the forty years' oppression, by Omri, King of Israel, and his successor (3 *b*—9 *a*). Through the mercy of Chemosh, Mesha was enabled to fortify Baal-Meon, and make from it a successful attack upon Kirjathaim; to take Ataroth, which the tribe of Gad had occupied from time immemorial, and which was fortified by the King of Israel, to devote to destruction all its inhabitants as an offering to his God, and to repopulate these places with loyal subjects from Siran and Mochrath (9 *b*—14*a*). Chemosh then told him to assault Nebo, which he successfully effected, slaying about seven thousand men, and devoting the women to Ashtar-Chemosh, and the vessels of Jehovah to Chemosh (14 *b*—18 *a*). Hereupon the King of Israel fortified Jahaz, from which he attacked Mesha, but Chemosh made him relinquish the battle, and retreat with the army to his own country (18 *b*—19), after which Mesha captured Jahaz, repopulated the city, and annexed it to Dibon (26—21 *a*).

### 1 I Mesha am son of Chemoshgad King of Moab, the

1. *I Mesha, &c.* That Mesha is the same whose desperate but successful resistance to the invasion of the three allied kings of Israel, Judah and Edom is described in 2 Kings iii. 4—27 is evident from the following facts. 1. Mesha whose exploits are celebrated on the Moabite Stone, like Mesha of the Old Testament, waged a terrible war with Israel for the liberation of his country, and 2. Mesha of this Triumphal Tablet, like Mesha of the Scriptures, carried on a protracted conflict with the Omri dynasty. As the whole dynasty of Omri only lasted forty years, and, moreover, as Mesha was a contemporary of Ahab, Ahaziah and Jehoram, it will hardly be maintained that in the short space of about twenty years two kings of Moab flourished, both bearing the same name and both fighting the same battles with the same kings of Israel. As vassal king over a people rich in cattle, and over a country abounding in pasture land, he paid to Ahab, king of Israel, an annual tribute of "one hundred thousand wethers and one hundred thousand rams, with their wool." It was but natural that when Ahab had fallen in the battle of Ramoth Gilead, Mesha should take advantage of the discomfiture of the army, the confusion of the people, and the feebleness of Ahaziah, to shake off the Jewish yoke and free himself from so heavy a burden (2 Kings, i. 1, iii. 4, 5). However, it was only after repeated revolts, and at the end of Jehoram's reign (*circa* B.C. 884), as we shall see hereafter (*vide infra*, line 8), that he succeeded in completely ridding the land of Moab from its Jewish invaders. It was in gratitude for this successful emancipation from the vassalage to Omri dynasty that Mesha erected this triumphal pillar. For the erection of monumental stones by conquerors to celebrate their victories, see 1 Sam. vii. 12, and 2 Sam. viii. 13; in the latter passage 'gat him a name' should be, 'set up a memorial.'

*Son of Chemoshgad, &c.* To express deep devotion to and unbounded faith in their special national Deity, the Semitic races often combined with their names those of gods who were more generally worshipped, in order to obtain appellations for their offspring. Hence, though Chemosh was the god of the Moabites, Gad, the god of Fortune, who was acknowledged by all the Canaanite nations, is joined with it in the name of Mesha's father. Chemoshgad, therefore, means *Chemosh is Gad*, i.e. there is no other god of Fortune but Chemosh. Similar combinations are exhibited in the Biblical names Elijah, i.e. *my god is Jah* (1 Kings, xvii. 1, 14, 15, &c.), Elimelech, i.e. *my god is Melech*, or *Molech* (Ruth i. 2, 3, ii. 1, &c.), Bealiah, i.e. *Baal is Jah* (1 Chron. xii. 5), Baal Gad, i.e. *Baal is the god of Fortune* (Josh. xi. 17, xii. 7, xiii. 5), Gaddiel, i.e. *my god of Fortune is El* (Numb. xiii. 10). The great reverence in which Gad, the god of Fortune, was held by all the Canaanite nations, as Geiger rightly remarks, will account for the fact why the tribe of Gad, which derived its name from this favoured Deity (comp. Gen. xxx. 12, the *Kethiv*=the textual reading) was used to designate all the Transjordanic Jewish population.

*King of Moab.* The ancient land of Moab was divided by the Arnon into two almost equal parts, northern and southern. As this river, which is the present Wady-el-Mojeb, flows in a deep chasm, with perpendicular sides, so that it takes a traveller more than two hours to cross it at those points where it is passable, a hostile invasion on Moab beyond the Arnon was both very difficult to the invaders, and easily observable by the defenders. It was owing to this natural boundary and defence that the Amorite conquests extended only to it (Numb. xxi. 26, &c.) The Israelites afterwards took this part from the Amorites (Deut. iii. 8). And though they extended their conquests up to the Arnon, the Jews always retained the consciousness that the region north of the Arnon to beyond Heshbon was properly Moabite country. That which was situate opposite Jericho was called *עֲרֹבָת סוּדָּה* the *Dry Region of Moab*, and that which was further in the country was denominated *שָׂדֵה סוּדָּה* the *Field of Moab* (Numb. xxi. 20, &c.; Ruth i. 2, 6, &c.) Moses delivered his last address "in the land of Moab" (Deut. i. 15), where he also died (Deut. xxxiv.) Though the Northern part was allotted to the tribe of Reuben (Numb. xxxii. 37; Josh. xiii. 9, xiv. &c.), a part of the Gadites also dwelt in this region (Numb. xxxii. 34—36; 1 Chron. vi. 66; Numb. xxxiii. 4, &c., with Josh. xiii. 17). The relations, however, between the Moabites and the Israelites after the conquest of Canaan were of a mixed character. In the time of the Judges, Eglon, king of the Moabites, with Ammon and Amalek, pressed forward beyond the Jordan into the territory of Benjamin, occupied Jericho, and enslaved Israel eighteen years (Judg. iii. 12—14). But at the expiration of this period the Moabite king was killed by Ehud, the Benjamite hero, and his army was slaughtered (*Ibid.* 15—30). This utter discomfiture seemed to have inspired the Moabites with a wholesome dread of the Israelites for some time, since it is only under the reign of Saul that they, with Ammon and Edom, are expressly called the enemies of the Jews (1 Sam. xiv. 47), having evidently again made successful incursions into the Jewish possessions. However, when David extended his dominion to the Euphrates, he re-conquered the Moabites as well as Ammon and Edom (2 Sam. viii. 2—12; 1 Chron. xviii. 2—11); but during Solomon's reign, or immediately after his death, Moab regained its independence (*vide supra*, p. 20, &c.)

*The Dibonits.* Dibon, the ruins of which are situate on the east side of Jordan, about an hour north of the Arnon, and are called Dibhân, has now derived fresh fame from the fact that this Triumphal Tablet was found in it. This city is counted to Reuben in the list of Joshua (xiii. 9); and in Numbers (xxxii. 34) it is said to have been built by Gad. In the constant struggles with the Moabites and Ammonites, in which Reuben and Gad took the greatest share, the fortunes of war no doubt alternately gave this and other places to Reuben and Gad, and *vice versa*. The fact that Dibon was the native place of Chemoshgad,

- 2 Dibonite. My father reigned over Moab thirty years, and I reign-  
3 ed after my father. And I erected this Stone to Chemosh at Korcha [a Stone of]

the founder of this dynasty, accounts for the erection of the Stone by Mesha in this place, which was the disputed border-land between Israel and Moab. Schlottman, indeed, will have it that the patronymic, *the Dibonite*, does not only describe Chemoshgad as being a native of Dibon, but is especially designed to convey the idea that he was originally prince of the district or province of Dibon. But though it is true, as we shall see hereafter (comp. *infra*, line 21), that Dibon, like *Ar* (comp. Numb. xxi. 28, xxii. 36; Isa. xv. 1, with Deut. ii. 9, 18, 29), denotes both a city and a district of which it was the principal town; yet we fail to see from Numb. xxii. 8, 14, and xxiii. 6, that Moab was divided into separate provinces, that these several districts were governed by distinct princes like the kingdom of Edom (comp. Gen. xxxvi.) and that Chemoshgad, from first being prince of the land of Dibon, was promoted to be king of the whole of Moab.

As the final *i* is uniformly plene in this Inscription, there can hardly be any doubt that the pronunciation of the pronoun is *אני* or *אני*. Schlottmann's argument, that as its pronunciation with *i* exists even in ancient Phœnician (comp. Schröder, *Phöniz. Sprache*, § 41) it is but reasonable to assume its existence in the Moabite dialect, which approximates to the Hebrew still more closely, is based upon an erroneous division of the words in the only passage where it is supposed to be found. No. x. of the graffiti of Abydos, line 4, the solitary instance of *אני* in Phœnician appealed to, Levy shows is to be read *אני עבדאסמן* *I Yabodasman*, and not *אני עבדאסמן* (*Phönizische Studien*, iv. 32). As to the remark of the Midrash, *אנוני לשון מצרים*, *the expression Anochi in Egyptian*, which Professor Kaempfer quotes in support of its being pronounced *אני*, we fail to see the force of the appeal. If the passage in question really means that this pronoun is not to be found either in Arabic or in Aramaic, that it is superfluous in Hebrew by the side of *אני*, and that it has been introduced into Hebrew from the Coptic, it cannot surely be maintained that the Midrash insists that this spelling or pronunciation of it was imported from the Egyptian. The name *משא* *Mesha* is here defective, whilst in the Hebrew Scriptures, where it occurs twice, once as this Moabite king (2 Kings iii. 4) and once as the name of the eldest son of Caleb (1 Chron. ii. 42) it is plene. It is now almost certain that the second part of the name of Mesha's father is *גד* *gad*. The *Daleth* is quite visible on the Stone and there are faint traces of the *Gimel*. Equally certain is it that the lacuna at the end of the line is now to be filled up with *He* and *Daleth*. The patronymic, *הדיבוני* *the Dibonite*, exactly corresponds to *השימוני* *the Shimonite* (Josh. xxi. 4) and many other proper names which by the addition of *Yod* at the end are made into patronymics (comp. Gesenius § 86, 5; Ewald § 164, 6). Both in the Bible (Gen. xxxvi. 31—39) and in the monuments of the ancient Phœnicians, patronymics follow proper names (comp. Levy, *Phönizische Studien*, part iv. pp. 25, 28; Schröder, *Die Phöniz. Sprache*, p. 235).

According to Hitzig, *אני* is a detached nominative placed at the beginning, the lacuna after Chemosh is not to be filled up by *Gad*, as M. Ganneau declares, but by the repetition of Chemosh, who is the subject of the sentence. Neither is the last letter of this line to be *Daleth* but *Tzadi*, thus yielding *הדיבני* (comp. *אני* 1 Kings xxii. 48), to which *אני* is second accusative, and the passage is to be rendered '*I Mesha son of Chemosh, Chemosh made me King of Moab*,' thereby deriving his sovereignty from his god. As Hitzig rejects M. Ganneau's decipherings and prefers his own conjectures all argument ceases. Professor Kaempfer advocates a similar sense without impugning M. Ganneau's readings, by taking Chemosh with whatever adjunct as well as the phrase 'King of Moab' to be the Moabite deity, and the word *son* of to denote '*his follower and worshipper*.' He refers to Numb. xxi. 29, where the Moabites are called "the children of Chemosh," and to the fact that the ancients called themselves the children of the deity which they worshipped. But to take '*son*' and '*ruler*' in the first line in a metaphorical sense and '*father*' and '*ruled*' in the second line in a literal sense is to violate the primary laws of language.

2. *My father, &c.* From the fact that Mesha simply gives the years of his father's reign, and says that he immediately succeeded him, we may reasonably conclude that his grandfather was not a king, and that with Chemoshgad began a new Moabite dynasty. It must not, however, be concluded from this that Moab was an elective monarchy. The fact that Mesha succeeded his father upon the throne, and that he again was to have been succeeded by his eldest son, whom he sacrificed on the wall (2 Kings iii. 27), shows that the sovereignty was hereditary.

*Thirty years, &c.* With what corresponding years in the Biblical history, and with what Jewish kings, the commencement and end of these thirty years synchronize may be gathered from the following data. The expedition of the three allied kings of Israel, Judah, and Edom against Mesha took place most probably in the first year of Jehoram's reign, B.C. 896, which is to be inferred from the fact that Elisha was in the camp. As this invasion was undertaken because Mesha on his accession to the throne of Moab had revolted against Israel and thus terminated the forty years' vassalage, the thirty years' reign of his father Chemoshgad must have commenced B.C. 926, or synchronized with the fourth year of Omri's sole reign and the reigns of Ahab (B.C. 918—898) and Ahaziah (B.C. 898—896).

As to the linguistic features of this line they almost entirely agree with what we find in the Hebrew Scriptures. Thus the orthography approaches more nearly the Massoretically transmitted writing than the Phœnician. *אני* *I reigned*, in this line; *השני* *he saved me*, and *הראני* *he shewed me*, in line 4; *בניתי* *I built*, in lines 21, 22, 26, 27; *עשיתי* *I made*, in lines 23, 26; *דגתי* *I dug*, line 25; *והשניתי* *I added*, line 29, have the *scriptio plena* of the final *i*, or, as in the Hebrew, express the first person by the suffix *Yod*, though in the middle of words the *Vav* and *Yod*, when used in the Biblical Hebrew to express the *o* and *i*, are generally absent in this Inscription, as will be seen in some of the above-quoted words, viz. *השני* *he saved me*, Hebrew *השיני*, though this form of the präterite does not occur in the Bible; *בניתי* *I built*, is written in the Bible *בניתי* with *Yod* in the middle (1 Kings viii. 13, 27, &c.), *עשיתי* *I made*, Hebrew *עשיתי* (Gen. vii. 4, viii. 21, &c.) A remarkable feature in so early a document is the form of the plural *אני* *in*, instead of *אני* *im*, as in *אני*, *thirty*, in the line before us; *אני*, *many days*, line 5; *אני*, *forty*, line 8; *אני*, *armed*, in line 28; since it has hitherto been supposed that it is an Aramaic termination which has crept into later Hebrew (e.g. Ezek. iii. 12: Dan. xii. 13: comp. Gesenius, § 87 a: Ewald § 177). *אני* year, is a contraction of *אני*, like *אני* daughter, from *אני* *Gath*, proper name, from *אני*, &c. This contracted form frequently occurs, as well as the full form, in Phœnician (comp. Schröder, *Phöniz. Sprache*, § 24). The combination *אני* *thirty years*, like the syntax of the numerals throughout the Inscription, is pure Hebrew. (Comp. *אני* *forty years*, line 8; and *אני* *two hundred men*, line 20, which is the pure Hebrew *אני* 1 Sam. xviii. 27, xxx. 10: 2 Sam. xv. 11: *אני* *seven thousand*, line 16, Hebrew *אני*: Numb. iii. 22: 1 Kings xix. 18: Gesenius, § 120: Ewald, § 268).

3. *And I erected this Stone.* Having, in the customary way, mentioned the reign of his father, and his own succession to the throne, Mesha at once states that he erects this monument, which is to record and memorialize the remarkable events of his sovereignty. As a pious follower of the Moabite religion, he dedicates this Triumphal Tablet to the national god, Chemosh. The idea that hill-tops are nearer heaven, and that retiring to them is to withdraw from earthly distraction, and to be in the more immediate presence of the Divine Being, gave rise to the custom, which obtained among all nations from time immemorial, to worship the Deity on lofty spots, and then to erect altars and places of worship on mountains, elevations, and high places. The Persians, Greeks, Germans, &c., performed their religious rites on hill-tops (Herod. i. 131, vii. 43; Xen. *Cyrop.* vii. 7; Strab. xv. 732). Abraham and Jacob sacrificed upon mount Bethel (Gen. xii. 7, xiii. 3, 4, xxviii. 16, and xxxv. 15, with Josh. xvi. 1; 1 Sam. xiii. 2). Isaac was to have been offered on mount Moriah (Gen. xxii. 2); Moses was

## 4 [sa]lvation, for he saved me from all despoilers and let me see my desire upon all my enemies.

commanded to build an altar on mount Ebal (Deut. xxvii. 4); Joshua too built an altar on the same mountain (Josh. viii. 30); Samuel offered on high places (1 Sam. ix. 12–14); Christ “went up into a mountain apart to pray” (Matt. xiv. 23); whilst Peter, who had no mountain at hand, “went up upon the house-top to pray” (Acts x. 9). These sacred places were called *בָּמוֹת* *high places*. In neighbourhoods where no natural elevations existed, artificial mounds were thrown up, or simply high altars, stones, or pillars were erected, inscribed with records of victories, dedications, and thanksgivings. These artificial erections, and even the pillars without the mounds, were synecdochically called *בָּמוֹת* *bamoth*. Hence the Septuagint rightly renders the word in question not only by *τὰ ὑψηλά, τὰ ὕψη high places*, but also by *στῆλαι pillars, posts, or monuments*, with inscriptions like that upon the Moabite Stone. The last mentioned fact accounts for the circumstance, that the spot where the Moabite Stone was found was not only not an elevation but a depression.

*To Chemosh at Korcha.* For a description of the Moabite national Deity, Chemosh, we must refer to the Commentary on line 17, and for Korcha, to the Commentary on line 21. The most remarkable feature of the grammatical construction in the diction of this Inscription is the use and effect of what the ancient grammarians call *Vav conversive*, (*והפך*), or *Vav consecutive*, as some modern grammarians call it, or as Ewald terms it, *Vav consecutive conversive* (Gesen. § 49; Ewald § 231). This connection of the *Vav* conversive with the Imperfect, or the apocopated Future, has hitherto been found only in the Hebrew, and now we find it throughout this Inscription. Thus, in the line before us, we have *וַיַּעַשׂ* *and I made*, which is the apocopated future with *Vav* conversive of the full form *וַיַּעַשׂ*. But what is of additional importance is, that the full form actually exists, and, like several others, is used in later Hebrew (Ezek. xx. 14; Dan. viii. 27), whilst in this Inscription the shortened form of the earlier diction is used. The other apocopated Futures will be indicated in the notes on the respective lines wherein they occur. Equally remarkable is the use of the verb *פָּעַל* for *doing, making*, just as in Hebrew, whilst in Phœnician, and in all other Semitic dialects, *לָעַל* is used, which in the Old Testament only occurs in poetry. (Comp. Schröder, *Phöniz. Sprache*, § 8, p. 17). *לָעַל* *stone* has the archaic termination *n = ath*, which, though common in Phœnician, has survived in Biblical Hebrew only in a few instances (*vide supra*, p. 27). The absence of the article in the pronoun *אֵל* *this* after a substantive, with the article, *i.e.* *אֵל הַזֶּה this pillar*, instead of *הַזֶּה*, also occurs in the Hebrew Scriptures, especially as in the case before us, in connection with the pronouns *הוּא* and *הִיא*. Thus *בַּלַּיְלָהּ הַזֶּה in the same night* (Gen. xix. 31, xxx. 16, xxxii. 23; 1 Sam. xix. 10); *הַזֶּה this generation* (Ps. xii. 8, comp. Gesen. § 111, 2; Ewald, § 293 a). In Phœnician it is always absent. Whilst *אֵל* *this*, is spelled in this Inscription exactly as in Hebrew, in Phœnician it is *al* without *Aleph* (Comp. Schröder, § 58). At the end of this line there is a lacuna of three letters, which is most probably to be filled up with *מ* *me* or *ו* *and*, and which, with the *Beth* in the text, yields the word *בַּמָּה*, and the *Mem* or the *Yod*, with the two letters at the beginning of the next line, yields *בַּמָּה* or *בַּמָּה*, *i.e.* *the pillar of salvation, the stone of help* (So Nöldeke, Schlottmann, Derenbourg, Wright, &c.) The absence of the article forms no difficulty in the Moabite diction, when it is borne in mind that it is nearly always absent in Phœnician (Comp. Schröder, *Die Phönizische Sprache*, § 63). Neubauer's conjecture, that *לֵל* is to be added to the *ל*, which, with *ה* before *ש* would yield *לֵשׁוֹן הַזֶּה*, *on account of the assistance*, requires more space than the hiatus will allow, and deprives the Stone of its name, which, according to the analogy of 1 Sam. vii. 12, is to be expected. Haug's German filling up [*deswegen heisse ich Me*]scha, “therefore I am called Mesha, *i.e.* the saved,” would be in the original *שָׁמַעְתִּי וְקָרָאתִי מֵשָׁא*, which, to say the least, requires three times the space of the lacuna. The same objection applies to M. Ganneau's restoration, *je m'appelle*, ‘I call myself.’ In a private letter, Mr. Aldis Wright suggested to me *שָׁמַעְתִּי בְּשֵׁם מֵשָׁא in my name Mesha*, or *שָׁמַעְתִּי בְּשֵׁם מֵשָׁא in the name of Mesha*, and Professor Kaempf, of Prague, makes the same suggestion independently. The latter urges against *שָׁמַעְתִּי בְּשֵׁם מֵשָׁא* that it requires a phrase like *וְקָרָאתִי וְשָׁמַעְתִּי and I called it* (Gen. xxxix. 20) or *וְשָׁמַעְתִּי וְקָרָאתִי*

*and I called its name* (Exod. xix. 15). He, however, would either fill it up with *שָׁמַעְתִּי בְּשֵׁם מֵשָׁא in the place of victory*, or *שָׁמַעְתִּי בְּשֵׁם מֵשָׁא in the town Lasha* (Gen. x. 19), according to the nature of the place where the Stone has been discovered. If the Stone rested upon a basis, it would indicate that it was originally erected at Dibon. In that case, Professor Kaempf would fill it up with the first phrase. But if the Pillar was lying about without any sign that it was originally erected there, he would fill up the lacuna with *in the town Lasha*. Mesha, the Professor suggests, erected this Pillar at Lasha in gratitude for the renewed health which he found in the sanitary use of the hot springs in this place. Hence *וְשָׁמַעְתִּי* does not refer to Mesha's enemies but to *his bodily infirmities* in the sense of *accidents*. He afterwards removed this monument from Lasha to Dibon, either for safety or for some other reason. Accordingly *וְקָרָאתִי* is to be taken in the sense of *וְקָרָאתִי* (= *וְקָרָאתִי*). Against this, however, is to be urged, that the first phrase restricts the issue of the conflict to a victory gained at Dibon, and that the second is too far-fetched, as well as contrary to the scope of the Inscription. Hitzig fills up the lacuna with *שָׁמַעְתִּי בְּשֵׁם מֵשָׁא for all the deliverance*, and Mr. Hayes with *שָׁמַעְתִּי בְּשֵׁם מֵשָׁא and this house of salvation*; Geiger simply translates it *bekorcha Mesha*, without stating what he does either with the remaining letter *Beth* or with the lacuna.

4 *Because he saved me, &c.* In giving his reason why he erected this Ebenezer, Mesha seems almost to use the very language which Samuel uttered, when he put up a similar pillar between Mizpeh and Shen, in acknowledgment of the help vouchsafed to him by Jehovah in defeating the Philistines (1 Sam. vii. 12). Indeed, the verbal difference between, or rather the use of the two synonyms in, the two utterances, entirely arises from a play upon the words. Whilst the Hebrew Prophet only extends this play upon words to the stone and the deliverance, by using the same root in both cases; the Moabite King goes further, and extends it to his own name also, inasmuch as he calls the stone *Mesha = help*, in allusion to his own name, which denotes *deliverance*, and then uses the verb from the same root. It was, therefore, the allusion to his own name which necessitated the use of the verb *שָׁמַעְתִּי* *to deliver, to save*, instead of its equivalent *וְשָׁמַעְתִּי*. Through this circumstance we obtain a new form of the root *שָׁמַעְתִּי*, since *שָׁמַעְתִּי* Hiph. pret., 3 per. sing., with suffix, 1 per. sing., does not occur in the Hebrew Scriptures. Professor Wright remarks that “*שָׁמַעְתִּי* is a distinctly Hebrew form, a Hiphil with preformative *He*, since the Phœnician prefix is *Yod*.” It is, however, questionable whether this verb can be adduced as an illustration, since it would seem that even in Phœnician the preformative *He* was characteristic of the Hiphil in verbs of roots *Pe, Yod*. (Comp. Schröder, § 91). But there can be no doubt that *וְשָׁמַעְתִּי* in the second hemistich of this line is a purely Hebrew form (Comp. 2 Kings viii. 13; Jerem. xxiv. 1, xxxviii. 21; Amos viii. 4–7, viii. 1), and illustrates the affinity in question.

Though the parallelism shows most clearly that *וְשָׁמַעְתִּי* must denote *robbers, despoilers*, yet this expression occasions a difficulty, since it does not exist in Hebrew either in the plural or in this sense. Professor Levy, in a letter to Professor Nöldeke, suggests the reading *וְשָׁמַעְתִּי*, which indeed denotes *despoilers, robbers*. But as the letters *כ* *Caph*, and *ל* *Lamed*, have no resemblance whatever to each other in this Inscription, such an arbitrary alteration cannot be admitted. Nöldeke himself thought of the reading *וְשָׁמַעְתִּי Kings*, as the difference between the *Mem* and *Shin* is very slight, but for the fact that it implies too much of self-glorification and boasting on the part of Mesha. Hitzig adopts this emendation, and Kaempf is favourable to it; but Ganneau, after repeated investigation of the Stone, declares it incompatible with the original. As the noun *וְשָׁמַעְתִּי*, however, denotes in Hebrew *a bird of prey*, from the fact that *it throws itself upon* (*וְשָׁמַעְתִּי*, *to cast*) its victim, and, moreover, as this name is supposed to have been given to the *cormorant* (Levit. xi. 17; Deut. xiv. 17), from the habit of this bird to cast or plunge itself upon the fish it eats, we may easily presume that this appellative denoted other despoilers who manifested the same characteristic of pouncing upon their victims. For a similar figure of an enemy represented as a bird of prey, see

5 Now Om[r]i, King of Israel, he oppressed Moab many days, for Chemosh was angry with his

Deut. xxviii. 49. *ראה ב* to look at, to feast the eye upon, is very often used both in the Kal and Hiphil, with regard to the joy felt at the destruction or defeat of one's enemies. An exact parallel of the Hiphil in this sense, as used in the line before us, we find in Ps. lix. 10 [11], *אלהים יראני בשלחך*, *God shall let me see my desire upon my oppressors*. Hence Derenbourg's rendering, *M' a permis de regarder avec indifference tous mes ennemis*, "has permitted me to look upon all my enemies with indifference," does not express the idiomatic sense of the phrase.

5. *Omri, King of Israel, &c.* As the Bible mentions only one Omri, King of Israel, whose reign extended from about B.C. 929 to about B.C. 918, there can hardly be any doubt that the enemy of the Moabites here mentioned is the same whose battles with that people are recorded in 2 Kings iii. 4—27. Now it is this part of the Inscription which is of the utmost interest to the Biblical scholar and the student of history, inasmuch as we learn a new fact not recorded in the Scriptures. The relations of the Israelites with the Moabites up to the death of David, have already been described. (*Vide supra*, p. 35).

The particular point to which we must call attention is, that from the account of David's war with the Moabites (2 Sam. viii. 2; 1 Chron. xviii. 2), when two-thirds of the people perished, and the survivors were enslaved and utterly despoiled (2 Sam. viii. 11, 12; 1 Chron. xviii. 11); from the circumstance moreover that their name is not mentioned in the account of the campaign in which the Ammonites were subdued, and also from the fact that in the time of Ahab they paid the annual tribute of a hundred thousand rams and the same number of lambs, with their fleeces, it has hitherto been supposed that they were completely reduced to vassalage. Hence they were not only unable to aid their relatives, the Ammonites, against the Jews, but could not even free themselves from the enormous taxation which they had to pay, from the time of their subjugation by David up to the reign of Ahab. From this and the following three lines of the Inscription, however, we see that the Israelitish dominion over Moab ceased altogether, immediately after the death of Solomon, or rather during the lifetime of this Sovereign; and that it was Omri who reconquered the Moabites, and first exacted from them the excessive tribute mentioned in 2 Kings iii. 4. That the Moabites should have used the amorous propensities of Solomon in order to obtain their liberty from the Jewish yoke, is perfectly natural, and will easily be understood. But it was as natural for Omri, who, according to all information, was a mighty warrior and a powerful ruler (1 Kings xvi. 16—28), to subjugate them again, as is stated in this Inscription. The same indeed seems to be implied in the reference in the Book of Kings to the more extensive chronicle, "for the mighty deeds which Omri performed" (1 Kings xvi. 27).

*For Chemosh was angry, &c.* The reason why Omri was successful in his attack upon the country, and why he continued to oppress the Moabites so many years, Mesha tells us was, that Chemosh their national god was angry with his land for some sin not specified. This is almost the very language of the Bible (comp. 2 Kings xiii. 3: xvii. 20: xxi. 11—15, &c.). Indeed, if we did not know the nature of the Moabite religion from other sources, and if the name of Jehovah were substituted for Chemosh, this Inscription would read like a chapter in the Book of Kings. It is through the anger of Chemosh that the enemy of his people is enabled to conquer (line 5). Through the favour of Chemosh the hostile armies are defeated (lines 8, 9). When victory is gained, the first fruits of the spoil are devoted to Chemosh as a thankoffering (lines 11—13). The battle is ordered by Chemosh (lines 14—32), to whom both the spoil of Israel and the sacred vessels of Israel's God are dedicated (lines 17, 18). Not unto the prowess of men, but unto Chemosh = God himself, is victory ascribed (line 19). Hence, when Chemosh to whom the land belongs (lines 5, 6) grants deliverance to it from its enemies, Mesha, in pious gratitude, erects this Tablet to celebrate the mercies and victories vouchsafed to the people under his divine care. *יגע* is the third person singular Kal of *גע* = *to humble, to afflict*, the *Vav* as in Arabic being retained as a radical letter. If *ישראל*, *Omri, King of Israel*, is taken

as the nominative absolute, the *Vav* in *יגע* is the conversive, but if it is taken as the accusative still dependent upon *יגע* the *Vav*, as is often the case, is to be taken in the sense of *who* (comp. Gen. xlix. 25: Isa. xiii. 14: Ps. lv. 20: Job xxix. 12), or *for* (comp. Gen. xx. 3: Isa. iii. 7: xxxix. 1). The rendering of the whole sentence, accordingly, is *and let me see my desire upon all my enemies and Omri, King of Israel, who oppressed Moab*. Nöldeke points it *יגע=יגע*, takes the *Vav* as suffix third person, and explains it as the pleonastic anticipative suffix, i.e., "and he oppressed him—Moab." But this construction, though common in Aramaic, is contrary to the uniform diction and orthography of the Inscription. Hitzig points *יגע* comparing it with *יגע* (1 Sam. xxi. 14). But we have no instance of *Piel* throughout the whole of the Inscription. The same objection is to be urged against Professor Kaempf, who points it *יגע*. As for the lacuna at the end of the last line, it is greatly to be regretted that M. Ganneau does not specify its exact dimensions. Still, as he rejects Nöldeke's insertion of *הם*, *he arose*, before *יגע* *Omri* (which is followed by Dr. Wright), saying that "it does not exist" in the text, and adopts Sir Henry Rawlinson's and De Vogüé's reading of *יגע*, he thereby virtually indicates that there is space for only one letter. The objection is still greater to Hitzig's insertion of *יגע*, *he arose*, which has three letters, and the remarkable filling up of Kaempf *יגע בן יסע*, *the son of Jesse arose*: we are therefore driven to obtain the sense from the sentence without inserting a finite verb. De Vogüé, M. Ganneau, Mr. Haycs, &c., translate it *Omri was King of Israel, and he oppressed Moab*. But this is grammatically inadmissible, inasmuch as it requires *יגע* in the first clause. Hence we are either forced, with Schlottmann, to take *יגע* *יגע* as the nominative absolute followed by *Vav* conversive (comp. *יגע* *והוא* *and his concubine she also bore*, Gen. xxii. 24: also 1 Sam. xi. 11: 2 Sam. xix. 41: Gesenius, *Lehrgebäude*, p. 723). Or we must take Omri as still dependent upon *יגע*, i.e. *and in Omri*. The vertical bar visible in the Inscription may be taken as a broken *Vav*. The *Vav* in *יגע*, as is frequently the case, denotes and especially, and particularly, comp. *יגע* *יגע* *Jehudah and Jerusalem* (Isa. i. 1: ii. 1: Gesenius § 155 1 a: Ewald § 340). The preposition which stands in the first clause is not infrequently omitted in the second, as is the case in Isa. i. 1, and ii. 2, where *יגע* *יגע* *concerning Judah and Jerusalem* stands for *יגע* *יגע* *concerning Judah and especially concerning Jerusalem*, comp. also Isa. xlviii. 14: Heb. iii. 15: Job xii. 12. Hence *יגע* stands for *יגע*. For the plural termination *יגע* in, instead of *יגע* *im*, in *יגע* *many days*, see the Comment. on line 2. The form *יגע* *he was angry*, may either be an abbreviation of *יגע* *יגע*, or as Geiger and Schlottmann suggest is the Tiphel or Tiphel (comp. *יגע* *impf. יגע*, *to vie with*, Jerem. xii. 5: xxii. 15: Gesenius, § 55, 5: Ewald, § 122 a) thus corresponding to conjugation v. or vi. in Arabic. Hitzig's redivision of *יגע* into *יגע* *Sonach ergrimmt Chemosh*, "hereupon Chemosh was angry," maintaining that *יגע* is here an inferential particle like *יגע* in Syriac, to say the least is contrary to the uniform diction of the Inscription. The lacuna at the end of this line is easily filled up by the letter *Resh*, which, with the two letters at the end of this line and the two at the beginning of the next, yield *יגע* *with his land*. Derenbourg's rendering of this clause, *Mais Chemosh s'irrita contre lui et l'extermina*, "but Chemosh was angry with him and exterminated him," as well as that of Haug, *da entbrannte der Zorn des Kamosch*, "then was kindled the anger of Chemosh,—i.e. when the King of Israel oppressed Moab a long time,"—cannot be made to harmonise with any emendation which takes cognizance of the four remaining letters, viz. *יגע*. Very remarkable is Hitzig's filling up of the lacuna at the end of this line, viz. *יגע* *when his end came* (i.e. Omri's) and his son followed him, he also said I will oppress Moab, he (i.e. Chemosh) said in my days," &c., in spite of the versicular divider after *יגע* at the beginning of this line and of M. Ganneau's declaration that there is only space for *יגע* and though this construction is most harsh and unnatural.

6. *His son succeeded him, &c.* Not only did the powerful Omri succeed in again subjugating Moab and holding it as vassal during his

6 [a]nd. His son succeeded him, and he also said, I will oppress Moab. In my days he said, [Let us go]

7 and I will see my desire on him and his house, and Israel said, I shall destroy it for ever. Now Omri took the land

life-time, but when after his death his son Ahab came to the throne (*circa* B.C. 918) he too determined to continue his hold upon the country and to exact the heavy tribute. The reason why the phrase "and his son succeeded him" is used, and not simply "and his son also oppressed Moab," is to show that there was no change in the dynasty, and that the next oppressor of Moab was unlike his predecessor in this respect, since the latter was the founder of a new dynasty. For the same reason, Mesha, when speaking of himself, uses a similar phrase, viz. "I reigned after my father." *Vide supra*, line 2.

*In my days he said, &c.* This evidently refers to Ahab, Omri's son, who is the immediate antecedent, and means that "the reconquest of Moab by Omri took place in my father's days, but *in my days* his son Ahab declared he would continue the oppression." The linguistic features in this line show that the composition of this Inscription belongs to a period when the forms, which we now regard as archaisms and abnormal were generally current and normal. Thus the suffix third person singular masculine, in three consecutive words, viz. *אָרַח* his land, *וַחֲלָלָהּ* and he succeeded him, and *בְּנֹה* his son is *ה* instead of *ו*. In the Hebrew Scriptures this termination has survived chiefly in the older fragments (Gesenius § 91: Ewald § 247, d), by an oversight on the part of those redactors who introduced the more modern and uniform orthography. Thus *אָרַח* his tent, instead of *אָרַחְו*, which occurs four times (Gen. ix. 21: xii. 8: xiii. 3: xxxv. 21); *בְּעִירָהּ* his beast (Exod. xxii. 4); *כִּסְיָהּ* his covering (Exod. xxii. 26); *נִסְכָּהּ* his drink offering (Levit. xxiii. 13); *בִּגְדֵיהָ* his garment (Gen. xlix. 11); *חֲמִירָהּ* his foal (Gen. xlix. 11). But all these instances the Massorites correct in the margin of the text by what is called *Keri* (קרי). That there is no Massoretic remark on *אָרַח* his tent, in the present editions of the Hebrew text, only shows the arbitrariness with which the modern editors proceeded in appending the correction in one instance and omitting it in another, since the Massorah distinctly declares *וְאָרַחְו* *it is four times written ארחה, with He, but read ארחה with Vav.* The lacuna of about three letters at the end of this line must be filled up by a verb which quotes the speech. This is evident from the verb *אָמַר* he said, which immediately precedes it. The *Vav* with which the next word begins, viz. *וְאָמַר* and I shall see, shows that a verb is wanting. And as this is the resolution of the King of Israel to resubjugate Moab, and a summons to his army to this effect, the word to be supplied is either *נָא* or *נָלֵךְ* let us go. It is surprising that so erudite and ingenious a scholar as Geiger, who rightly recognises that *הִלֵּךְ* here has the pregnant signification of *to succeed to the throne*, as in Arabic, should do such violence to the simple construction of this line. He maintains that the *Aleph* at the beginning of *אָמַר*, is not the prefix of the first person, that the form is not the Future at all, but the Preterite Aphel formed according to the Aramaic fashion; that it corresponds to the Hebrew Hiphil; and that it has the same meaning as the Piel *עָמַר*. He moreover takes the simple *אָמַר* *in my days he said* as *אָמַר* *in the days of Amar=Omar* assuming that the gutturals *Aleph* and *Ayin*, are interchanged in the Moabite dialect as in the other Aramaic dialects, or that the mason committed an error in the Inscription.

Equally surprising are Professor Kaempf's arbitrary proceedings with the text. He alters *וְאָמַר* and he said into *אָמַר* *then he said*, fills up the lacuna with *ו* which with *אָמַר* in the text yields *אָמַרְו*; points *אָמַרְו* and translates "then he also said I will oppress Moab in the days of my sovereignty." If it could really be established that the stroke exhibited after *אָמַר* at the end of this line which might also be the remainder of a *Nun* is positively the fragment of a mutilated *Kaph* we might be disposed to fill up the lacuna with *אָמַרְו* at this time, now (comp. Judg. xxi. 22: Isa. viii. 23) and with Hitzig adduce as a parallel to *אָמַרְו* the phrase *אָמַרְו* (Exod. xvi. 6). Mr. Hayes suggests *אָמַרְו* *thus* and refers to *אָמַרְו* (1 Kings xxii. 8) in favour of his construction. But the quotation is inapposite, inasmuch as the two phrases are not parallel.

7. *And I shall see, &c.* The determination on the part of the King of Israel, as here quoted by Mesha, was nothing more or less than the utter discomfiture of the Moabite army and the humiliation of the Moabite king. To render the description as epigrammatic as possible, the response of the Jewish people to this summons is also quoted: and "Israel said, I will destroy him with an everlasting destruction." They, in fact, were even determined to surpass the army of David, who slew two-thirds of the Moabite people (2 Sam. viii. 11, 12). In line four, the Hiphil of *רָאָה* with *ו*, is used to denote the delight felt at seeing the destruction of an enemy; here the Kal is used. For similar instances, compare *וַיֵּדְאוּ* they see their delight in me (Ps. xxii. 18): *וַיֵּדְאוּ* and I shall see my delight on my enemies (Ps. cxviii. 7). For *ה* instead of *ו*, suffix third person masculine in *בְּנֹהָהּ*, see line 6. The "house" is the royal family. The verb *אָמַר* said, which introduces the *oratio directa*, is omitted after *וַיֵּדְאוּ* and Israel. This ellipsis, which is of frequent occurrence in ordinary diction (comp. Numb. xxiii. 7; Isa. xxvii. 4; Ps. ii. 3, viii. 4, lii. 9; Job viii. 18), is here all the more natural, because the verb is used in the preceding parallel hemistich, and can easily be carried over. *אָמַר* is the Hiphil future first person, which also occurs Jerem. xli. 8, in a similar connection. The accusative of the object is omitted because it has been previously mentioned. (Comp. Gen. ii. 19, xviii. 31, xxi. 14, xxiv. 12, xxxviii. 17. Gesenius § 119, b). As *עָלַם* is not preceded by the prefix *ל* or *ע*, it is in the construct state with *אָמַר*, which is the abstract form, *destruction*, as in Numb. xxiv. 20, 24. Accordingly, the literal translation of the clause is, *I will destroy it with an everlasting destruction.* An exactly parallel construction, but in the opposite sense, is to be found in Isa. xlv. 17, *וְיִשְׁעוּ בְיָמֶיךָ* *he shall be saved by Jehovah with an everlasting salvation.* But this very parallel is another proof of the antiquity of the style of this Inscription. Whilst in Isa. xlv. 17, the plural *עָלַם* is used which, as Knobel has pointed out, "belongs to the later mode of expression, and is only to be found again in xxvi. 4, li. 9, as well as in the later Psalms, the books of Kings, Chronicles, Ecclesiastes and Daniel" (Comm. on Isa. xlv. 17), this Tablet has the old form in the singular. In confirmation of our rendering, viz. that it is Israel who exclaims Moab shall perish, and not *vice versa*, we may quote the very striking passage in Numb. xxi. 29, *וְאַתָּה עַתָּה תִּפְּרֹשׁ* *thou art perishing, O people of Chemosh*, which might almost lead us to suppose that there is some relationship between the two passages. Schlottmann, Haug, and Neubauer make Chemosh the subject of the verb *אָמַר*, i.e. *Chemosh said*, and the latter supplies the lacuna with *I will go*. But this construction deviates unnecessarily from the simple rules of the language, inasmuch as *בְּנֹה* his son is the immediate antecedent; and as the first *אָמַר* is the predicate of *בְּנֹה*, the laws of grammar demand that the second *אָמַר* should also be referred to the same subject. Besides, this rendering breaks in upon the sense, for it abruptly introduces Chemosh in the middle of the description of the oppression of Moab by the King of Israel, and it necessitates the taking of the phrase *וְיִשְׁעוּ* here, in the opposite sense to that in which it is used two lines before. Derenbourg's translation, *Tant que je vivrai je le tourmenterai et je ferai du mal, &c.*, "as long as I live I will torment it and do evil," &c., is contrary to the use of *בְּנֹה* in this Inscription (*vide* lines 9, 33). Still more inadmissible is Derenbourg's opinion that *עָלַם* is the town *Almon*, and his rendering of the clause *Israel avait détruit Almon*, "and Israel had destroyed Almon." Apart from the absence of the *Nun*, which is perfectly unaccountable on the hypothesis that it is *Almon*, the insuperable objection to this is that wherever an active verb precedes the name of a town in this Inscription it is generally followed by *אָמַר*, the sign of the accusative. (Comp. lines 6, 7, 9, 10, &c.) The lacuna of two letters at the end of this line, with the first letter of the next line, may be supplied with *אָמַר* land. This is fully corroborated by the last reading of the squeeze. Hitzig takes no notice of M. Ganneau's declaration that the first letter of line 8 is *Tzadi*, but adheres to the *Ayin*, which was marked as doubtful, and fills up the lacuna at the end of this line with *ו*, which, with the letters of the next line, he makes into *וְיִשְׁעוּ* the hill.



8 Medeba and [the enemy] occupied it [in his days and in] the days of his son, forty years. And Chemosh [had mercy]  
9 on it in my days; and I built Baal Meon, and made therein the ditch and I [built]

8. *Medeba*, a Moabite city, on the eastern side of the Jordan, is first mentioned in the ode which describes the conquest of that country by Sihon the Amorite (Numb. xxi. 27—30). From the fact that it gave its name to a section of the high plain called 'the Mishor of Medeba,' and that Isaiah mentions it as one of the four chief cities (xv.), it is evident that it was a very important place. That it continued so we infer from the fact that, four hundred years later, the Amorites and their allies selected it as their strong battle-ground in the fight with Joab, David's general, and that when they were totally defeated, the Amorites sought refuge in its strongholds (1 Chron. xix. 1—15). The ruins of Medeba still exist, and bear the old name, only that the first of the two words of which it is compounded has the Arabic form *mā* for the Hebrew *me*=water. They are situate about four miles south-east of Heshbon. (Comp. Kitto, *Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature*; Smith, *Dictionary of the Bible*, s. v.) It will be seen that *Medeba* is written in two words with a disjunctive point after *Me*, thus showing that a double origin was assigned to it at that period, and that the *water* has a treble termination, viz., *Mo* in *Moab*; *Me*, in *Medeba*; and *Ma* in *Medeba*. M. Ganneau maintains that the *He* in *Medeba*, as well as in *Nebo* serves as a support to the vowel *a*, and that the Moabites must have pronounced it *Madeba* as their descendants the Bedouins do to the present day. Schlottmann however, will have it that to be *Ma* it would certainly have been written *Ma* and that the pronunciation *Māh* can only be supported on the assumption of a termination in an audible *He* with Mappik, which is quite improbable. The division of the name into two words has parallels in the proper names *Mezahab* (Gen. xxxvi. 39; 1 Chron. i. 50), *Me-jarkon* (Josh. xix. 46), which are respectively written as two separate words in the Massoretic text. Hitzig, as usual, disputes this division of the name and assigns to it an indogermanic etymology, viz., *Medhavā*=*Mīḍava* by Ptolemy, denoting in Sanscrit, *place of sacrifice*. He maintains that it obtained this name in the remotest antiquity when it was occupied by non-Semitic people.

And [the enemy] occupied it, &c. Owing to its situation and military importance, Omri first subjugated the town of Medeba, and fortified himself therein for strategical purposes; since from this fortified centre he could throw out his army in different directions, harass the neighbourhood, and spread consternation all around. Such a mode of warfare, of occupying and fortifying one town from which to operate upon different parts of the country, seems to have been a common military stratagem. Thus we find that Eglon, king of the Moabites, occupied only "the city of the palm trees," or Jericho, concentrated therein his battalions, who sallied out from it in companies, overran the country, and by this means enslaved Israel eighteen years (Judg. iii. 13, 14).

Forty years. Great as is the difference of opinion respecting the words to be inserted in the lacuna in the middle of this line, yet the two portions of the sentence seem to limit our choice. The beginning of the sentence distinctly states, that with Omri commenced the forty years' occupation of Medeba, and the word after the lacuna says that with his son and successor these forty years terminated. Hence, we are driven to obtain the forty years from Omri and his son alone, and in harmony with it must insert such words as shall fill up the lacuna. Schlottmann makes up the forty years as follows:—*i.* the four years of Omri's disputed reign, and of civil war with Tibni; *ii.* the twelve years of his sole and undisputed reign as King over Israel; *iii.* the twenty-two years of his son Ahab's reign; and *iv.* the two years of the reign of Ahaziah, son of Ahab. But this erudite scholar admits that Omri was not likely to have engaged in a hostile expedition against, and to occupy, Moab immediately after his succession to the throne, and during the civil war. As Mesha's revolt took place immediately after the death of Ahab, he maintains that we must regard the forty years as a round number. That round numbers are used in this Inscription, as in all other ancient documents, both sacred and secular, is evident from line 16, where Mesha declares that he killed seven thousand Jews, since no one will affirm that the number

of slain amounted to exactly seven thousand. It would, therefore, easily be conceded that, if required, the forty years might be taken as a round number; that any figure between thirty-five and thirty-nine may constitute it, and that less than thirty, or even thirty-five, cannot reasonably be admitted. Schlottman's calculations, however, fall far too short of this definition. For we have not only to deduct from it the first item, *i.e.* the four years of civil war, but also four years of the second item, *i.e.* from the sole reign of Omri; since he assumes, after Ewald, that the twelve years of Omri's reign are exclusive of his joint reign with Tibni, which is contrary to 1 Kings xvi. 15—29, with 1 Kings xxii. 41, and against the common chronology. Moreover, as it is hardly likely that even Omri would organize and despatch an invading army immediately after the termination of a protracted and terrible civil war, we shall have to allow some time for the recruiting of the decimated warriors, which brings us to the third year of his sole reign, or to the seventh of the twelve years of his entire reign. To obtain from this period the forty years' occupation of Medeba, as stated in this Inscription, we shall have to advance into the reign of Jehoram, viz. *i.*, the five years out of Omri's reign; *ii.*, the twenty years of his son Ahab's reign; *iii.*, the two years of his grandson Ahaziah's reign, and *iv.*, the twelve years of his second grandson Jehoram's reign (5 + 22 + 2 + 12 = 41). Hence the occupation of Medeba, by Omri and his house, as is argued by Dr. Weir, and was argued formerly by us, coincides with the duration of the dynasty of Omri, which, calculated from the close of the war with Tibni, extended according to the received chronology, exactly forty years B.C. 924—B.C. 884. Accordingly the Stone must have been erected in the beginning of Jehu's reign, and the lacuna must be filled up with the words *and he occupied it* [he, his son, and his son's] *son forty years*. But against this is to be urged that *i.* This calculation includes the reigns of both Omri's grandsons, Ahaziah and Jehoram whereas the word *days of*, which precedes *his son*, limits the forty years to Omri and Ahab his son. Dr. Weir feels the inconvenience of this word so much that he proposes to alter it into *sons of*. *ii.* It postpones the liberation of Moab to the commencement of Jehu's reign, and thus separates Mesha's victories celebrated on this Triumphal Stone from the victory recorded in the Bible. All the difficulty, however, disappears, if we take the Biblical narrative as the point for our calculations backwards. As the expedition of the three allied kings against Mesha, and Mesha's victories over them took place in the first year of Jehoram's reign circa B.C. 896, when the independence of Moab was secured; accordingly, its resubjugation by Omri must have been effected circa B.C. 936, when he was still Baasha's general, just as Joab, the Captain of David's hosts, conquered Ammon for his sovereign. The lacuna therefore is best filled up with *and (the enemy) occupied it (in his days, and in) the days of his son forty years*. Professor Davidson's suggestion that the easiest supplement would be *and Omri dwelt in it all his days and all the days of his son* is somewhat extraordinary, inasmuch as it makes Omri occupy Medeba in the days of his son, when Omri was dead and had been succeeded by his son. The lacuna of three or four letters at the end of the line, is most probably to be filled up with *and he was gracious*. Nöldeke supplies *and he restored her*. Schlottman suggests *and he looked favourably*, whilst Hitzig, who erroneously makes the line to have a *Tzadi* at the end, gives *and he oppressed*. The sense remains the same, though we believe that *Chemosh was pleased with it*, is better suited to the antithetical *Chemosh was angry with it*, in line 5. Haug's rendering of the lacuna [*aber gross ward*] *Kamosch in meinen Tagen*, "but Chemosh became great in my days," for which the Hebrew is *therein*, is not only indefinite, but is against *therein*. Equally unsatisfactory is Neubauer's filling up with *and he dwelt*.

9. *In my days*, &c. Mesha uses this phrase twice to define the period of the oppression during his reign. In line 6 he tells us that the accession of Ahab to the throne of Israel, and the determination

- 10 Kirjathaim. For the men of Gad dwelled in the land [Atar]oth from of old, and the K[ing of I]srael fortified  
 11 A[t]aroth, and I assaulted the wall and captured it, and killed all the wa[rriors of]  
 12 the wall, for the well-pleasing of Chemosh and Moab; and I removed from it all the spoil, and [of-

of the Jewish king to continue his iron grasp upon Moab took place in his days, whilst here he triumphantly states that it was in his days also that the grinding yoke ceased. Mesha does not ascribe the deliverance of Moab to his military stratagem, or to the prowess of his army, but to the goodness and mercy of Chemosh, just as he ascribes the oppression of the land to his anger. Without the permission of their God, the people could neither be subjugated nor liberated.

*And I built Baal Meon, &c.* Having taken Medeba, he marched forward to Baal Meon, about two hours' distance. Its ruins are situate about two miles south-east of Heshbon; they are called *Maein*, and have given their appellation to the *Wadi Zerka Maein* (Comp. Seezen, *Reisen*, i. 402). As Baal Meon is one of the towns which the Reubenites built (Numb. xxxii. 38), it must have been partially destroyed by the Israelites, who retired into the strongholds of Kirjathaim after Mesha took Medeba. Hence Mesha rebuilt it and fortified it. The reason for his fortifying Baal Meon is not only to be found in the fact that it is half way between Nebo and Kirjathaim, the two hostile places which were next to be attacked, thus forming a centre of operation, but in the condition of Kirjathaim, the next place of attack. As Mesha had to besiege it, and as the issue of the assault was doubtful, he had to prepare and strengthen a place for retreat, that he might have it to fall back upon in case of defeat. This precaution, however, was not necessary, for Kirjathaim was evacuated and destroyed by the Jewish garrison on the approach of Mesha with his army, as is evident from the context. Mesha, who had not as yet engaged his opponents in conflict, was therefore obliged to rebuild and fortify it to prepare himself for the issue of war. The lacuna of two letters at the end of this line is to be filled up with *ן*, which, with the two remaining letters, yields *באן*, and *I built*, as is evident from the corresponding clause. For *באן* and *באש* the apocoped futures with *Vav* conversive, see line 3. *אש* a ditch, from *שח*, to sink, to dig, with Aleph *prostheticum*, is according to the analogy of *אש* (2 Kings, iv. 2). Though this form of the noun with prosthetic Aleph does not occur in the Hebrew Scriptures, yet the feminine *שח*, a pit, a ditch, does occur in Jerem. xviii. 20, 22. Schlottmann suggests that it may signify a huge cistern or tank to hold the water in case of siege, as *שח* in Job. ix. 31. Dr. Wright remarks that its vocalization may perhaps be *אש*, according to the analogy of *אש*, like *אש*, *אש*.

10. *And I built Kirjathaim, &c.* From Baal Meon, Mesha proceeded to Kirjathaim, which is about two hours from the former place, and about four hours south-west of Medeba, and which, as Dietrich has shown, is the present ruin *Kureiyat*, under the south side of *Febel Attarâs*. (Comp. Merx, *Archiv für Wissenschaftliche Erforschung des Alten Testaments*, part iii. pp. 337—342.) This place, which the Reubenites took possession of, rebuilt, and re-named (Numb. xxxii. 37, 38), like Baal Meon, Mesha had to restore, for the Jewish garrison destroyed it before retiring.

*And the King of Israel, &c.* As the simple occupation of the place, by the men of Gad, would not necessarily call forth a siege, Mesha further explains that the King of Israel had fortified it. Though the name of the King of Israel is not given, the context hardly leaves any doubt that it was Ahab. Mesha was a contemporary of Ahab, and as it was this monarch who on his accession to the throne determined to tighten his hold on Moab (Comp. line 6), he would naturally effect this by fortifying and garrisoning additional Moabite cities (Comp. 1 Kings, xxii. 39). Besides the inscription records the events chronologically, and this is the first instance in which we are told that Mesha attacked the Jewish army, thus marking the revolt under Ahab which Jehoram's expedition was designed to quell and avenge.

In *קרתן*, we have the dual form *קרתן* for the Hebrew *קרתן*, so also in *קרתן* line 20; *קרתן*, line 30; and *קרתן*, lines 31 and 32. The same is the case in the plural, comp. line 2. For the exception to this usage see *קרתן* line 15. The phrase *קרתן*, *man of Gad*, has its exact parallel in the Hebrew Scriptures, where the singular *קרתן*, *man*, is frequently used in

a collective sense before the names of Tribes. Comp. *קרתן*, *the men of Ephraim* (Judg. viii. 1); *קרתן*, *the men of Judah* (Jerem. iv. 3; xi. 2). There can hardly be any doubt now that the lacuna after *קרתן*, in the land, is to be filled up with *קרתן*, *Ataroth*. This is not only evident from the second clause, where this very name is now to be found, but from the fact that *קרתן* has still survived. Hitzig, however, questions whether the *Tav* belongs to this place, and says that if it does he would fill up the lacuna with *קרתן* (Comp. Isa. lvii. 2, with Prov. xiv. 2; Isa. xxvi. 10, with xxv. 10). The filling up of the two missing letters at the end of the line is easy: the first is *Kaph*, and yields, with the *ל*, the word *קרתן*, *King*; the second is *Yod*, which, with the words at the beginning of the next line, yields *קרתן*, *Israel*.

11. *And I assaulted, &c.* Having stated the circumstances which necessitated the siege, Mesha goes on to say that the assault followed in due time, and that he not only successfully captured the wall, but that he killed all the warriors who defended it. The most remarkable and interesting linguistic feature of this Inscription is the conjugation *Hiphthael*, in *קרתן* here, and line 15, *קרתן* in line 19, and *קרתן* line 32, with *קרתן*, or with the *קרתן* inserted after the first radical. This transposition occurs in Hebrew and Aramaic only when the first radical of the verb is a sibilant (*קרתן*, *קרתן*, *קרתן*). Comp. *קרתן*, to take heed, for *קרתן*, to be burdened, for *קרתן* Gesenius § 54, 2), whilst in Arabic it constitutes the feature of the eighth conjugation. Remnants of a similar transposition, however, are to be seen in *קרתן* (Joel i. 6; Prov. xxx. 14, Job xxix. 17), and *קרתן* (Ps. lviii. 17). The lacuna at the end of this line is to be filled up with *קרתן*, which, together with the remaining *קרתן*, yields *קרתן*, the warriors of. Ganneau, however, supplies *קרתן*, the people of, which is too general a term and does not suit the context. The suggestions of Nöldeke and Hayes *קרתן*, Schlottmann *קרתן*, Wright *קרתן*, Hitzig *קרתן*, Kaempf *קרתן*, &c., are now set aside by Ganneau's remark that what he at first took to be *קרתן*, seems more like *Gimel*.

12. *For the well-pleasing, &c.* The warriors who occupied and defended the wall, Mesha tells us, he slew to a man, to please both the national god and the nation. The inhabitants of the city, however, together with the spoil, they offered up in the temple of the town Kirjath, before Chemosh. Ataroth was the first place which fell after a siege and regular fight, and Mesha, in accordance with the ancient custom, consecrated to destruction both its inhabitants and the spoil, as the first-fruits of conquest. This consecration to God by destruction also existed among the Israelites (Levit. xxvii. 28), and took place more especially in the case of conquered enemies. The sacrifice in cases of war was either partial or total, according to the vow and dedication of the general, or hero. Thus, of the distant nations whom the Jews should conquer, all the males were to be slain (Numb. xxxi. 7; Deut. xxi. 12—15). At Jabesh Gilcad the men and married women only were devoted to destruction, whilst the maidens were spared (Judges xxi. 11—12). In the case of the Amorites and the Canaanites, all the men, women, and children were consecrated by destruction, whilst the cattle and the chattels were kept as spoil (Deut. ii. 33—35, iii. 6, 7, xx. 16; Josh. viii. 2, 25—27, x. 28—43, xi. 11—14). At the conquest of Jericho, the Israelites acted in exactly the same manner as Mesha; they devoted to destruction before Jehovah all its population, and all that was therein, except the several metals, which however were consecrated to the service of the Lord (Josh. vi. 17—19). The word *קרתן* well pleasing, is either to be taken as a contraction of *קרתן* just as the Moabite name *קרתן* *Ruth*, is a contraction of *קרתן*, which is given in the Peshito from *קרתן*, kindred from *קרתן* to delight, gratify, please, or from *קרתן* the *Kethiv* in Eccl. v. 10. For *קרתן* the apocope Future Hiphil, with *Vav* conversive, e.g. *קרתן*, see above line 3. The lacuna at the end of this line, though large, is not difficult to fill up, since the context indicates the missing words. The letters *קרתן* at the beginning of the next line, and especially the words 'before Chemosh,' show beyond doubt that the three last missing letters of the line are

13 fered] it before Chemosh in Kirjath; and I placed therein the men of Siran and the me[n of]  
 14 Mochrath. And Chemosh said to me, Go take Nebo against Israel. [And I]  
 15 went in the night, and I fought against it from the break of dawn till noon, and I took

וַיִּשָּׂא, which, with the remaining half word, yield וַיִּשָּׂא and I offered it, the very word used in line 18, in exactly the same phrase. As the inhabitants were destroyed, the only thing left to be offered to Chemosh was the *spoil*. Hence the remaining hiatus is to be filled up with *all the spoil*. Hitzig supplies וַיִּשָּׂא וַיִּקְרָא לָהֶם “and I removed from it (the small cattle and oxen to) offer them, &c.” Hayes, “and I brought back thence the (*Altar of Jehovah and put*) it, &c. Kaempf, וַיִּשָּׂא וַיִּקְרָא לָהֶם “and returned thence (*after I collected the spoil this I placed*) before, &c.

13. *And I placed therein, &c.* Having destroyed the ancient inhabitants, or “the men of Gad, who dwelled in Ataroth from time of yore,” as they are described in this Inscription, Mesha re-peopled the place with “the men of Siran.” The replacing of the original inhabitants of a conquered place by new and loyal subjects was commonly resorted to in ancient warfare (Comp. 2 Kings xvii. 26). For שִׁירָן *man*, which is here used twice in a collective sense, *i.e.*, *men*, see line 10. קִרְיָתָה *Kirjath* is simply an abbreviated form of קִרְיָתָהִים *Kirjathaim*, analogous to the Greek and Latin *Kapias* and *Coragatha* used by Eusebius and Jerome. As for שִׁירָן *Siran*, we have scarcely any doubt that it is שִׁבְנָה *Siban*; the *Beth* and *Resh* being so like each other in this Inscription, nothing is more likely than an interchange of these letters. Accordingly it is the city שִׁבְמָה *Sibam* (Numb. xxxii. 3), also called שִׁבְמָה *Sibmah*, which was taken and occupied by the tribe of Reuben (Josh. xiii. 19), and was famous for the excellency of its grapes (Isa. xvi. 8, 9; Jerem. xlviii. 32). It must have been near Baal Meon, Kirjathaim, and the very places which Mesha took, since it is grouped with these places in the catalogue of the Moabite cities (Numb. xxxii. 37, 38). Indeed Jerome, in whose days it still existed, says that it was nearly five hundred paces distant from Heshbon (*Comment. in Isaian*, lib. v). Derenbourg, who also takes שִׁירָן *Siran*, as identical with שִׁבְמָה *Sibam*, and שִׁבְמָה *Sibmah*, comes to this conclusion from the fact that the so-called Jerusalem Targum translates שִׁבְמָה by שִׁירָן (Numb. xxxii. 38). But against this is to be urged that, *i.* This Targum does not give duplicate proper names by which one and the same place was known, but simply converts them into Chaldee appellations, as is evident from the fact of its rendering אֶתְרוֹת *Ataroth* in these very passages (Numb. xxxii. 3, 34, 35), by כִּרְיָתָה *Kirjathaim* the crown distributed. *ii.* Even if it could be shown that שִׁירָן *Siran* was the name of Sibmah after Christ, when this Chaldee Paraphrase was compiled, it would be most hazardous to transfer it to 900 years before Christ, and claim for it a place in the Moabite vocabulary: and *iii.* The reading שִׁירָן in the Targum is far too doubtful to found any argument upon it. Hitzig however thinks it most probable that שִׁירָן is identical with שִׁירָן (1 Chron. v. 16) = שִׁירָן and that etymologically it is equivalent to שִׁירָן just as שִׁירָן and שִׁירָן. Accordingly *Sharon* does not denote a town, but a *plain*, a *district*, a division of *Mishor* or the plain *el Kura*. Dean Stanley had suggested this long ago that “*Sharon* may be a synonym for the *Mishor*—a word probably derived from the same root, describing a region with some of the same characteristics and attached to the pastoral plains east of the Jordan (*Sinai and Palestine*, App. § 7: Smith, *Dictionary of the Bible*, s.v. *Sharon*). The identification of שִׁירָן *Sibam*, or שִׁירָן *Siran*, with *Siban*, *Sibnah*, we thought with Derenbourg would render it almost certain that the lacuna at the end of this line, apart from the *ש*, which with the *א* yields *שִׁירָן men*, is to be filled up with זֶרֶת *Zereth*, which, with the following word at the beginning of the next line, is the *Zereth-Shachar*, the Reubenite city, mentioned together with Kirjathaim, and the very *Sibnah* (Josh. xiii. 19) here described, and which must, therefore, have been in close proximity to these Moabite cities. Or, if the lacuna is too small to admit of *שִׁירָן* which though not expressly stated is implied in Ganneau's rendering “*et les hommes de Maharouth*” thus making [שִׁירָן] the last word in the line, the filling up of the gap should be the simple *Shin*. In that case *שִׁירָן* would be an abbreviated form of שִׁירָן *Shiran*. But Ganneau's latest remark seems to forbid this explanation. He says “I have long hesitated as to the identity of the first letter of this

word which might be *Mem* or *Shin*; but I now possess the very piece of basalt which contains the word, and doubt is no longer possible,” *i.e.*, that it is שִׁירָן. In the face of this positive declaration we must either take the Moabite מוֹכְרָתָה *Mochrath* (= *morning*) to be the equivalent of the Hebrew שַׁחֲרָתָה *Shachrath* (= *dawn*) and still regard it as the Reubenite city in question, or wait with the exposition of the text till further investigation of the fragments has thrown clearer light; for Ganneau's suggestion that it may be the *Machaerus* (Μαχαίρου) mentioned by Josephus (Comp. *Antiq.* xiii. 16, § 3: *Bell. Jud.* vii. 6, § 2) is too far fetched and it is too distantly removed from the group of cities here described to be adopted. Nor is Hitzig's filling up of the lacuna by מְנֵה הַשָּׁמַיִם *the men of the high mountains* more natural.

14. *And Chemosh said, &c.* Though the battle resulted in utter destruction to the army and population of Ataroth, yet the victory must have been obtained at a very great cost. For instead of being able to avail himself of the prestige of the conquest, and at once lead the victorious army against Nebo, which was next on the plan for attack, Mesha remained inactive. And it was only by a direct summons from the national god, Chemosh, that he was roused, and inspired for action. This will appear still more evident, when it is borne in mind that, in marching upon Nebo, Mesha had not to pass through a sterile or hostile territory, but simply to retrace his steps into his own fortified and garrisoned places. He had to go through Baal Meon, which was two hours' distance from Kirjathaim, and was occupied by his own soldiers, and thence to Nebo, which was again only two hours' march from Baal Meon, as Nebo was lying almost midway between Baal Meon and Medeba, both of which were in his possession. The oracle from Chemosh summoning him to march upon Nebo, simply means that the exhausted soldiers were recruited, and that they were in a condition to resume operations. For נֶבֹּה *Nebo*, with *He*, instead of *Vav*, see line 6. The construction לָקַח עָלָיו to take against one, to take over one, in the sense of *taking it from*, does not occur in the Hebrew Scriptures, though we have a similar phrase in English, “to take it over their heads.” It is, as Schlottmann remarks, *constr. praeognans* = “take it fighting against Israel.” As the lacuna at the end of this line, according to M. Ganneau's positive statement, will only admit of one, or at most of two letters, it precludes Hitzig's insertion of [שִׁירָן] and *I marched on it, going*. This, therefore, seems to leave no alternative but to supply it, as M. Ganneau does, with *א* which yields *אֶתְרוֹת* but which it must be confessed does not suit the imperative לָקַח.

15. *And I went, &c.* In obedience to the command of Chemosh, Mesha marched against Nebo. But though Nebo is not described here as a fortified place, yet, from his experience at Ataroth, Mesha deemed it more prudent to steal a march under the cover of darkness. Being only four hours' journey from Ataroth, he arrived with the army before Nebo, at daybreak, and at once began battle, which lasted about six hours, and was decided in his favour. Nocturnal marches of armies, and surprises early in the morning, though even resorted to by generals in modern warfare in Europe, were more common and necessary in the East. In tropical climates military operations in the middle of the day would be most dangerous to the army. Stratagem, therefore, and the climate, were frequently the cause of marches under the cover and cool of night, and fighting early “in the morning watch.” (Comp. Josh. viii. 3, x. 9; 1 Sam. xi. 11.)

For מִן הַבֹּקֶר see line 11. It is rather remarkable that מִן הַבֹּקֶר which in the Hebrew Scriptures denotes *to beat, to beat out, to expand*, is here used in the sense of *rising*, as applied to the dawn, when there are regular phrases for this expression, *viz.*, עֲלֹת הַשָּׁמֶר, Gen. xxxii. 25, 27; Judg. xix. 25; and בֹּקֶר הַשָּׁמֶר (Isa. lviii. 8). The same portion of the day which is here defined by מִן הַבֹּקֶר עַד הָעֶרְבַּיִם *from the rise of the dawn till noon*, is in the Hebrew Bible described by מִן הַבֹּקֶר עַד הָעֶרְבַּיִם *from morning and until noon*; (comp. 1 Kings xviii. 26,) which is the only place where this phrase occurs. In the description, however, of the whole day מִן הַבֹּקֶר עַד הָעֶרְבַּיִם *from the rising of the*



16 it, and slew in all seven thousand [men, but I did not kill] the wom-  
17 en [and ma]idens, for [I] devoted [them] to Ashtar-Chemosh; and I took from it

dawn till the coming forth of the stars, which also occurs only once (Neh. iv. 15), the phrase for the beginning of the day approaches more nearly the one used in the line before us. As *Resh* and *Beth* are so very much alike in this Inscription, and, moreover, as we have already had occasion to suspect the substitution of one for the other in the *fac-simile* (see commentary on line 13), I from the first thought, that the word should be *בִּכְעָה*, as in Isa. lviii. 8, but gave up the alteration, from an innate dislike to conjectural emendations of the text of any document. In conversations, however, with Mr. Bensly and Professor Chenery, I found that they had independently come to the same conclusion; and seeing, moreover, that Professor Kaempf, in a different part of Europe, arrived at the same conviction, I am now almost certain that the letter in question is *Beth*, and not *Resh*. Professor Kaempf, besides appealing to *יָבֹקַע בַּשָּׁחַר* in Isa. lviii. 8, refers to the Talmudic phrase *רָאוּ אֵילָה הַשָּׁחַר שֶׁבָּקַע אֹרֶחַ* they saw the gazelle of the spring, whose light broke forth (*Jerusalem Yoma* iii. 2; *Midrash Rabbah* on the Song of Songs, vi. 10). But though this late usage of the word cannot by itself establish its currency at so early a period as the Moabite Stone, still it shows that this verb continued as a regular expression for the breaking forth of the dawn and of light even in post Biblical compositions. *שָׁחַר* the dawn, with *He* feminine at the end, does not occur in the Hebrew Scriptures, where it is uniformly masculine. *שָׁחַר* in Ecc. xi. 10 cannot be adduced as an exception, since it does not denote dawn (Comp. Ginsburg, *Comment. on Ecclesiastes*.) It is somewhat strange, that whilst the termination *Nun* is uniformly used in this Inscription for the plural and dual, *נָרַם*, should here be a solitary exception with *Mem*.

As Ganneau positively declares that *א* terminates and completes line 15, and that *ח* commences line 16, we have now the entire word *וְאֶתְּחַבֵּד*; Hitzig's emendation *וְאֶתְּחַבֵּד אֶתְּחַבֵּד* and I subdued its host, must therefore be rejected.

16. *And I slew in all, &c.* Though Mesha had no walls to assault, and the fortunes of the battle were decided in about six hours, yet the fact that the victorious soldiers slew seven thousand people of the male population alone, shows that Nebo must either have been a large and important place, or that it was strongly garrisoned. It was evidently a thriving and wealthy city, and possessed of considerable treasures; since Mesha found enough of precious spoil to spare for Ashtar Chemosh. In this respect, the treatment of Nebo differs from that of Ataroth. In the latter place every one was destroyed, men, women, and children, also property; whereas in the former the male population alone perished, whilst the women and treasures were saved. This was probably owing to two causes; *i.*, Because Ataroth was the first-fruits of the conquest, as has already been shown; and *ii.*, Because Ataroth, being a fortified place, offered stronger resistance, and inflicted a heavy loss upon Mesha's army; whilst Nebo, not being fortified, was more easily taken, and hence did not exasperate the victors to the same extent. For *בָּלֹו* with *He* instead of *Vav*, suffix third person masculine, see line 6. *שֶׁבַע אֲלָפִין*, seven thousand, is explicative of this general statement. Schlottman points it *שֶׁבַע אֲלָפִין tribal dukes*, instead of *שֶׁבַע אֲלָפִין thousand*, because he thinks that a population of seven thousand was too great for Nebo. This he concludes from the following data:—*i.* The whole district in which Nebo among several other cities was situated, was pre-eminently pastoral, for which reason Reuben and Gad wished to possess it for their numerous flocks, and could therefore not have had a large population. *ii.* The present Kerek has about 7000 inhabitants, although it is now the only city of what once was the whole Moabite country, and cannot muster 1100 armed men. And *iii.* Mesha conquered Jahaz with 200 men (line 20), which shows that those cities were thinly inhabited. Against this, however, is to be urged that the present population of eastern cities cannot be taken as a criterion for their population in ancient days and in their flourishing condition. Compare for instance the inhabitants of Jerusalem now with those in the time of the second Temple, whilst the argument derived from line 20 of this Inscription

vanishes, through what we believe a more natural explanation of the phrase. (Comp. Commentary *in loco*).

As Ganneau now declares that he can decipher *נְבָרָה* and *נְבָרָה* among the missing words of lines 16 and 17, and that the *n* of *נְבָרָה* begins line 17, we see that about eleven or twelve letters, or three or four words are still wanting in line 16. Now in the next line Mesha tells us that he devoted the women to Ashtar Chemosh: they were consequently not included in the seven thousand slain ones. The statement, therefore, that the maidens received a different treatment from the men shows that the missing antithetical clause negates the action in the case of the females, which it affirms in the case of the males. Hence the lacuna, or the second hemistich, is to be filled up by the repetition of the verb with the negative which forms the positive in the first hemistich. Hitzig supplies *וְאֶתְּחַבֵּד אֶתְּחַבֵּד* but from its spoil we kept our hand back, and laid it up in heaps, whilst Kaempf fills it up with *וְאֶתְּחַבֵּד אֶתְּחַבֵּד* both men and women, infant and suckling. But this is precluded by the newly-deciphered words. The plural *נְבָרָה* does not occur in the Hebrew Scriptures; but the singular *נְבָרָה* a mistress, occurs nine times, with prefix and suffix, (Comp. Gen. xvi. 4, 8, 9; 2 Kings iii. 5; Isa. xxiv. 2; xlvii. 5, 7; Ps. cxliii. 2; Prov. xxx. 23). It will be seen that fully one-third of the instances occur in the oldest composition of the Scriptures. Neither does the plural *נְבָרָה* maidens, occur in the Bible; but the dual *נְבָרָה* occurs only once, and that in a very old portion of the Scriptures (Judg. v. 30).

17. *To Ashtar-Chemosh, &c.* Professor Schlottmann rightly remarks that we have in this broken line one of the most important contributions to the Canaanite theology or mythology, which at the same time throws light upon the mythology of the Greeks and Romans; since Ashtar, the masculine companion to the feminine Ashtarte, appears here for the first time in the religions of Canaan. Eminent scholars, who have devoted themselves to the investigation of the ancient cults, have shown to demonstration that the most primitive idea of God was that he consisted of a dual nature, masculine and feminine joined in one, and the connubial contact of this androgynous Deity gave birth to the creation. (Comp. Lajard, *Le Culte de Venus*; Vogüé, *Mélanges d'archéolog. orient.* Paris, 1868.) Hence the name Ashtar, or Ashtor, *אֲשְׁתָּר* = generative power, which, according to the analogy of *נָקְרָה*, with *n* inserted (Zech. iv. 12) is from *נָקְרָה* tied together, joined, coupled, connubial contact, whilst Ashtarte is the feminine half, or companion, the productive power. Among the Phœnicians, Ashtar, or the masculine of this androgyne, is called Baal (*בַּעַל*) = the Lord, whilst Ashtarte is Tanith (*תַּנִּיחַ*), and is described as "the Name of Baal," or "the Face of Baal." In harmony with this fusion of the two natures in one, Ashtarte is called, in a Phœnician Inscription, 'the King,' 'the Sun God,' (Schlottmann, *Die Inschrift Eschmunazars*, p. 143;) whilst, on the contrary, Baal is called Goddess (*הַבְּלָה*) in the Septuagint (Hos. ii. 8; Zeph. i. 4), and in the New Testament (Rom. xi. 4). As the subduing and conquering power (= *נָקְרָה* from *נָקַשׁ* to subdue, to tread down, *נ* and *ק* being interchanged), he was Chemosh, i.e., the conqueror of the Moabites, the Baal (*בַּעַל*) i.e., the Lord, *καὶ ἑξοχόν*, of the Phœnicians and Tyrians, the Molech (*מֹלֶךְ*) i.e., the King of the Ammonites. In this grim form he could only be appeased by human sacrifice, and especially with infants (2 Kings iii. 27; Amos ii. 1, with Jerem. xxxii. 35). Hence the interchange of the names when the tutelary deities of these nations are spoken of, Chemosh being described as the God of the Ammonites (Judg. xi. 24), and Baal-Peor as the God of the Moabites (Numb. xxv. 1; Josh. xxii. 17). Hence also the identification of them by Jerome, who remarks, in his commentary on Isaiah, cap. xv. *In Nebo erat Chamos idolum consecratum, quod alio nomine Beal-phigor appellatur.* As Chemosh = Ares, he is represented upon coins standing upon a cippus between burning torches, holding a sword in the right and a lance and shield in the left hand (Lajard, *Le Culte de Venus*, Table v. 9, with Eckles, *Doct. num. Vet.* iii. 394). As the generative and

- 18 [the ves]sels of Jehovah and offered them before Chemosh. And the King of Israel fortif[ied]  
 19 Jahaz, and occupied it, when he made war against me; and Chemosh drove him out before [me and]

productive power, he was Ashtar-Ashtarte (אֲשֶׁת־אֲשֶׁתָּר), or Baal-Peor (בַּעַל פְּעוֹר), and was worshipped with all the phallic mysteries (Numb. xxv. 1; Josh. xxii. 17). Hence the architecture of the temples dedicated to this androgyne, the decorations, the towers, the altars, the pillars, the sacred utensils, the vestments of the priests, and the attire of the worshippers were not only in harmony with, but symbolical of, this phallic worship, especially at certain seasons of the year and on particular occasions. At the licentious worship of this androgyne, the men wore women's garments, whilst the women appeared in male attire with weapons. (Comp. Deut. xxii. 5, with Maimonides, *More Nebuchim* iii. 37, p. 285, ed. Munk, Paris, 1866.) The importance of this Ashtar-Chemosh to classical antiquities arises from the fact, that we have here, upon Canaanite soil, as Schlottmann rightly remarks, the original of the Aphrodite mentioned by Aristophanes, the name of the bearded Venus Amathusia '*eadem mas et femina*.' The different features under which Ashtar-Chemosh was represented and worshipped will explain the different treatment of the vanquished places recorded in line 12 and here. There, after the first battle, and in the expectation of soon being engaged in another fight, the first fruits were offered to Chemosh, as the God of war; hence every thing was destroyed, men, women, children, and the spoil. Here he is recognised, after the second fight, and worshipped, as the Ashtar, to let the army indulge in the orgies by way of reward and stimulus; hence the women and the spoil are saved, and dedicated to the temple. For a similar practice see Numb. xxxi. 17, 18, 35, 40. The lacuna of about four or five letters after אֲשֶׁת־אֲשֶׁתָּר is most probably to be filled up with אֲשֶׁת־אֲשֶׁתָּר which yields the reading we have given. Ganneau's suggestion, that אֲשֶׁת־אֲשֶׁתָּר is to be regarded as the Infinitive Hiphel, *i.e.*, אֲשֶׁת־אֲשֶׁתָּר and that the lacuna after it should be filled up with אֲשֶׁת־אֲשֶׁתָּר *the women*, is both unidiomatic, and unnecessary, since the simple pronoun is quite sufficient. The suggestions, אֲשֶׁת־אֲשֶׁתָּר אֲשֶׁת־אֲשֶׁתָּר, *I devoted the city* or *I devoted it* (Schlottmann, Wright); [אֲשֶׁת־אֲשֶׁתָּר] *the spoil was devoted* (Hitzig); אֲשֶׁת־אֲשֶׁתָּר *I devoted the whole* (Kaempf), are both against the newly-deciphered words, and against the context. The lacuna of one letter at the end of this line Ganneau at first rightly filled up with ך; but his misunderstanding of the newly-deciphered verb אֲשֶׁת־אֲשֶׁתָּר in line 18 made him afterwards substitute erroneously the letters אֲשֶׁת, which, with the ך in the text, he made out אֲשֶׁת־אֲשֶׁתָּר *the tents of*.

18. *The vessels of Jehovah, &c.* If the name Ashtar-Chemosh in the preceding line is an important contribution to classical antiquity, by giving us the protoplast of the Greek Aphrodite, and the bearded Venus Amathusia, the mention of "the vessels of Jehovah" at Nebo is of still greater importance to Biblical archaeology. For we have here for the first time positive information that the transjordanic tribes, who were too far removed from the central place of worship in the metropolis of Palestine, must have had a sanctuary, with an organised ritual, as is indisputably implied in these "vessels of Jehovah." Jewish tradition, indeed, has always maintained that the Israelites had places of worship and study from time immemorial. (Comp. Acts xv. 21; Philo, ii. 167, 630; Josephus, *cont. Apion*, ii. 18; *Jerusalem Megilla*, iv. 1; *Babylon Babba Kama* 82 a, the Chaldee Paraphrases of the so-called Onkelos; Jonathan b. Uzziel, and Jerusalem Targum on Gen. xxiv. 62, 63; xxv. 27; Kitto, *Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature*, s. v. SYNAGOGUE). But these allusions were regarded as simply traditional. Here, however, we have a fact which will materially influence the future historic treatment of the Jewish pre-exile mode of worship.

*And the King of Israel, &c.* From a close examination of the context it will be seen that the bloodless taking of Medeba, Baal Meon, and Kirjathaim, and the sanguinary conquest of Ataroth, extended over a considerable period. Moreover, from the way in which the King of Israel is here introduced, as well as from the structure of the sentence, it is evident that a suspension of hostilities took place after the capture of Nebo by Mesha, and that, instead of resuming the offensive and marching upon Jahaz, the king of Israel appears on the scene of battle, fortifies himself at Jahaz, and begins the conflict. But though this is the first contemporary Jewish sovereign whom Mesha

encounters in the conflict, he simply introduces him as king of Israel, in accordance with the phrases king of Moab, king of Jericho, king of Ai, king of Syria (Josh. viii. 1; 2 Kings ii. 8), without giving his name. As this, however, is the last engagement which Mesha had with his antagonists in the north of the Arnon, and terminates the forty years' subjugation of Moab which commenced with Omri, there can hardly be any doubt that this king of Israel is Jehoram, whose conflict with Mesha is recorded in 2 Kings iii. 4—27. Finding that Moab, which had been subjugated by his grandfather Omri, and which yielded an important revenue to the Jewish treasury, had revolted under Mesha, and driven the invaders from several of the cities, Jehoram was determined to resubjugate them, and for this purpose he attempted at first to quell the revolt in the north itself.

The verb אֲשֶׁת־אֲשֶׁתָּר, which in the Hebrew Scriptures is used to denote *to drag, to draw along* (2 Sam. xvii. 13; Jerem. xv. 3), has here, and in lines 12—13, the technical signification of *to bring an offering, to offer*. In אֲשֶׁת־אֲשֶׁתָּר, we not only have the full form of the suffix pronoun as in אֲשֶׁת־אֲשֶׁתָּר (Deut. xxxii. 36); but the suffix is separated from the verb. There is no parallel for it in the Hebrew Scriptures, but Geiger calls attention to the fact that the object suffix אֲשֶׁת־אֲשֶׁתָּר, and אֲשֶׁת־אֲשֶׁתָּר, are separate in Biblical Chaldec, though they have an exclusively accusative sense. The lacuna of two letters at the end of the line is easily supplied from the context, ך is wanted at the end of ך, and the second is ך, the first of the two letters forming the sign of the accusative after the active verb.

19. *Jahaz, &c.* To effect the reconquest of the Moabite territory, the king of Israel occupied and fortified Jahaz, thus making it the centre of operation, from which to sally out against the rebels, just as Omri made Medeba his fortified centre (comp. line 8). Jahaz, Jahaza, Jahazah or Jahzah, as it is alternately called in the Authorised Version, is the place where the Israelites gained the victory over Sihon, which secured them the whole pastoral country between the Arnon and the Jabbok—the *Belka* of the modern Arabs (Numb. xxi. 23; Deut. ii. 32; Judg. xi. 20). According to Eusebius, Jahaz still existed in his days and was situated between Medeba and Dibon. Being an old city, in the possession of the Reubenites (Josh. xiii. 18), the Inscription does not say that the king of Israel took it, but simply that he fortified it. אֲשֶׁת־אֲשֶׁתָּר, here, as in line 9, and frequently in the Hebrew Scriptures, denotes *to rebuild, to fortify* (comp. Gen. viii. 20; Numb. xxxii. 34; 2 Chron. xvi. 6, with 2 Chron. xi. 5—10; and 1 Kings xv. 17).

*And he occupied it when fighting against me.* Several striking features occur in this account which make it almost certain that the battle at Jahaz was the first attempt of Jehoram to resubjugate Moab from the north, and which not only convinced him of his inability to effect it on the Reubenite and Gadite territory, but of his incapacity to do it single handed. This is, therefore, to be regarded as the northern beginning of the expedition against Mesha on the part of Jehoram alone, which ended in the southern invasion by the three allied armies recorded in 2 Kings iii. 4—27. We notice that, *i.e.*, The King of Israel is here described as being personally present at Jahaz, which of course presupposes that he had come with an army into the Moabite territory; *ii.*, Whilst in the case of Ataroth (line 11), and Nebo (line 15), Mesha distinctly says that he fought against them (אֲשֶׁת־אֲשֶׁתָּר), here he as distinctly declares that the King of Israel attacked him (אֲשֶׁת־אֲשֶׁתָּר); *iii.*, In the other battles, Mesha plainly says that he captured the places and destroyed the inhabitants: here he simply says that Chemosh drove the hostile army away; which unquestionably means that, for some reason not explained by Mesha, the King of Israel withdrew with the army into his own territory; and *iv.*, Mesha does not say that he slew any soldiers, which he would certainly have said had the Moabites been the conquerors in a battle. These considerations, therefore, justify us in taking the account here given as the first attempt of Jehoram to quell the revolt of Mesha. After successfully occupying and fortifying Jahaz, Jehoram was soon convinced that the Moabites who had hitherto carried everything before them were too strong for him. The King of Israel, therefore, retired with his army into his own country, and immediately organised the allied invasion of an entirely different part

- 20 I took from Moab two hundred men, all its poor, and placed them in Jahaz, and took it,  
21 to annex it to Dibon.

of Moab. For the form  $\text{מִשְׁכָּלִי}$ , see line 11. In this verb, and in  $\text{מִשְׁכָּלִי}$ , we have  $\text{ה-}$  for  $\text{י-}$ ; suffix third person, as is usual in this Inscription (comp. *supra*, line 6). The lacuna at the end of the line is easily supplied from the context. The letters  $\text{נ}$  are wanting, which, with  $\text{מ}$ , yield  $\text{בָּנִי}$  *before me*, and the *Vav* conversive, which belongs to the word beginning the next line.

20. *And I took from Moab, &c.* If any other evidence were required to show that there was no serious battle fought at Jahaz between the king of Israel and Mesha, we have it here. Surely two hundred men, even the chief or best of Moab, could not have taken a fortified place like Jahaz against the King at the head of the hostile army. It is, therefore, evident, that after Jehoram had retired from Jahaz, and returned home, he must have left only those behind who were either Moabites or favourable to them. These, Mesha, of course, would not slay. But the town and fortifications he re-peopled, garrisoned them with two hundred homeless people from Moab. For  $\text{מִשְׁכָּלִי} = \text{מִשְׁכָּלִי}$ , *two hundred*, see line 10.

The transplanting of large masses of population into newly acquired districts or fortified places was frequently resorted to in ancient days (comp. Obad. 20: Josephus, *Antiq.* xii. 3, § 4). Derenbourg, Neubauer, Nöldeke, Wright, &c., point it  $\text{רֵשָׁה לְכָל}$  *every chief of his* or every one of these two hundred military men was either a chief in the sense of a leader, a captain, or a chief of a family (comp. Exod. vi. 14, 25; Numb. vii. 2; xxxii. 28). This was also the meaning I attached to the phrase. Ganneau, Schlottmann, Hayes, &c., take it to denote *the full number*, or *all told*. But against this is to be urged that 200 military chiefs represent an enormous army, and that if so large a host had been led by them

against Jahaz the chiefs alone would not have been specified and the army totally ignored. Again, if  $\text{רֵשָׁה לְכָל}$  be taken as chiefs of families, it cannot surely be supposed as Hitzig and Kaempf rightly remark that so large a number of distinguished representatives of families would be torn from their possessions and houses, and be massed together in a city which had been deserted by the garrison, or that these first-class citizens would quietly submit to it. With Kaempf and Hitzig therefore I take it as  $\text{רֵשָׁה}$  from  $\text{רָשָׁה}$  *poor homeless*. These were the proper people to colonise a deserted city (comp. 2 Kings xxv. 12)  $\text{מִשְׁכָּלִי}$  may either be from  $\text{מָשָׂה}$  *to lift up, to carry, to place*, and hence be pointed  $\text{מִשְׁכָּלִי}$  with the suffix referring to  $\text{רֵשָׁה}$  collectively (so Ganneau, Neubauer, Nöldeke, Hayes, Wright, Kaempf, Hitzig, &c.), or it may be from  $\text{מָשָׂה}$  *to rage, to roar, to clamour in war, to fight* (Hos. x. 14; Amos ii. 2), and hence be pointed  $\text{מִשְׁכָּלִי}$  (so Derenbourg, Schlottmann, Schröder, &c.) The meaning of  $\text{רֵשָׁה}$  however leaves no alternative but to adopt the first sense.

21. *To annex it to Dibon.* That Dibon in this line and line 28 denotes a district which obtained its name from the town it surrounded, is evident from the fact that Jahaz is here described as being annexed to Dibon, and that in line 28 it is said "all Dibon was loyal." Such statements cannot be made about a town. Districts or provinces were often named after their central principal towns. Thus Ar is both the name of a city and district (comp. Numb. xxi. 28; xxii. 36; Isa. xv. 1: with Deut. ii. 9, 18, 29). It is now certain that the word at the beginning of this line is  $\text{לְקַחַת}$  infinitive of  $\text{לָקַח}$  *to add, to join, to annex*. The emendation of Kaempf  $\text{לְקַחַת}$  *to break the yoke of Dibon*, i.e., the yoke resting upon Dibon, and Hitzig  $\text{לְקַחַת}$  *and I took it to watch against Dibon*, are therefore precluded.

## PART II.

THE SECOND PART, 21 b—31 a, celebrates the public works undertaken by Mesha, after his deliverance from the Jewish invaders. The sudden withdrawal of a foreign army enabled him to devote himself to the restoration of those cities which the enemy destroyed during the protracted wars. Chief among these is the restoration of Korcha, with its parks, fortifications, gates, towers, palace, prison, and water-works (21 b—26 a); then come the rebuilding of Aroer, the construction of the road across the Arnon, the rebuilding of Beth Bamoth and Bezer which he could now effect, as Dibon, whose former inhabitants destroyed them, was now loyal (26 b—28 a); his addition of a new city to his dominions, and his rebuilding Beth Gamul, Beth Diblathaim, and Beth-Baal-Meon, which he colonised with faithful Moabites (28 b—31 a).

21

I built Korcha, the wall of the forest, and the wall

21. *I built Korcha, &c.* As the King of Israel was obliged to abandon Jahaz, and, indeed, to withdraw his army from the whole Moabite territory, the forty years' subjugation of Moab, mentioned in line 8, terminated, and it became a free country. Mesha, therefore, like a good sovereign, at once devoted himself and his liberated army to peaceful pursuits, to building and improving the various cities of his dominion. The first undertaking was the building of *Korcha*. In attempting to define the meaning of this difficult word, regard must be had to the following facts; *i.*,  $\text{קֶרְחָה}$  which also occurs in lines 3 and 24, is treated here as a proper name, and hence is without the article; and, *ii.*, as this stone was erected at Korcha (see line 4), and as it has been discovered at Dibon, it must have been a fortified suburb of Dibon, or a town on the confines of Dibon, since it is difficult to imagine that so heavy a stone would be removed, from any place at a great distance, and brought to Dibon. Hence, the conjecture that  $\text{קֶרְחָה}$  is the modern *Kerek*, which is a great distance from Dibon, is inadmissible. Besides, as Professor Nöldeke rightly remarks, "the name *Kerek*, the late Aramaic  $\text{כֶּרַך}$  was originally combined with other names, like  $\text{כֶּרַךְ יְרֵמְיָה}$  (Targum of Isa. xv. 1)  $= \text{χαράκωσα}$  was the appellation of sundry places in the flourishing period of the Aramaic, and has nothing whatever to do with the ancient  $\text{קֶרְחָה}$ ." Professor Schlottmann indeed takes Korcha to be another name for Dibon. But this is against the description here given of it, where it is treated as a separate suburb, with walls,

gates, towers, &c. It is to be added that Professor Nöldeke translates it "*die Fläche*," the name of a part, or district of Dibon; Professor Haug, *market place*; M. Derenbourg, *citadelle*, &c. By  $\text{הַחֹמֶת הַיְּבֵשֶׁת}$  *the wall of the forests*, is to be understood the solid fence around the plantations in Korcha, thus enclosing the parks, in contrast to the  $\text{הַחֹמֶת הַיְּבֵשֶׁת}$  *the wall of the hill* upon which most probably stood the royal residence.

Hitzig takes  $\text{הַחֹמֶת}$  as  $\text{הַחֹמֶת}$  construct of  $\text{הַחֹמֶת}$  *castle*, supplies  $\text{הַחֹמֶת}$  *the square with a fort of the woods and a fort of the forests*, referring to 2 Chron. xxvii. 4; Isa. xvii. 9, as a proof that castles and towers were built in woods and forests. But apart from the unnatural construction which this translation involves with regard to "the gates and towers" which follow, the word  $\text{הַחֹמֶת}$  is never used in this sense in Hebrew, in spite of Hitzig's reference to his commentary on Amos vi. 2, and the present decipherment of the text precludes his conjectural filling up.

22. *And I built the gates, &c.* Gateways in fenced cities were also fortified and closed with strong doors (comp. Neh. ii. 8, iii. 3, 6, &c.; Judg. xvi. 2, 3; 1 Sam. xxiii. 7; 2 Sam. xviii. 24, 33; 2 Chron. xiv. 7; 1 Macc. xiii. 33, xv. 39). *Towers* were placed at regular intervals on the walls (2 Chron. xxxii. 5; Jerem. xxxi. 38). Watchmen were kept therein day and night in the time of war, and the inhabitants of villages

22 of the city, and I built the gates thereof, and I built the towers thereof, and I  
 23 built the palace, and I made the prisons for the crim[inal]s with[in the]  
 24 wall. And there was no cistern in the wall in Korcha, and I said to all the people, Make for yourselves  
 25 every man a cistern in his house. And I dug the ditch for Korcha with the [chosen] men of

resorted to them in times of danger. In *שַׁעְרֵיהֶם* *its gates*, we have the *Yod* as the sign of the plural, which we should not expect in the Moabite, since it is often omitted in Hebrew (comp. Gesenius § 91; Ewald § 259) whilst in *מִגְדָּלֵיהֶם* *its towers*, where the *Tav* indicates the plural, the *Yod* is omitted. Indeed it may also be pointed *מִגְדָּלֵיהֶם* (comp. Ruth ii. 13), which is more in harmony and in euphemy with its companion noun. Owing to the forced translation which he gives of the preceding line, Hitzig is obliged to refer the singular suffix pronoun both in *שַׁעְרֵיהֶם* and *מִגְדָּלֵיהֶם* to the two forts.

23. *I built the palace, &c.* He not only enclosed the parks, and circumwalled Korcha, but built therein the royal residence. Korcha, therefore, was that to Dibon, which Zion was to Jerusalem. Ganneau takes *בֵּית מֶלֶךְ* as a proper name, *i. e.* *Beth Molech*, which, at first sight may be identified with Kufir el Molek, mentioned by Seetzen (i. 394 last journey) and would seem to be supported by the absence of the article before *בֵּית מֶלֶךְ*. But the recurrence of Korcha in the next line, shows beyond doubt, that the buildings in this place are still described. The context, therefore, absolutely demands that we take *בֵּית מֶלֶךְ* as an appellative, denoting *the house of the King, the royal residence*. Indeed *בֵּית מֶלֶךְ* without the article, denoting *the royal residence*, also occurs in the Hebrew Scriptures, comp. 1 Kings xv. 18; xvi. 18; 2 Kings xi. 20.

Geiger indeed escapes this objection by rendering *בֵּית מֶלֶךְ* *Temple of Molech*. But against this is to be urged that if a temple had been meant it would certainly have been *בֵּית מֶלֶךְ כִּשְׁמוֹשׁ* *Temple of Chemosh*, and not *בֵּית מֶלֶךְ* since the national God of the Moabites occurs no less than ten times in this Inscription and is always called Chemosh.

*And I made the prisons, &c.* Almost as soon as the Jews became a monarchy, and built palaces for their kings, the prison appears as an appendage to the palace, or constituted a special part of it (1 Kings xxii. 7). Hence the place of detention is distinctly described as being in the king's house (Jerem. xxxii. 2, xxxvii. 21; Neh. iii. 25), the very phrase here used for the palace. We know that in Babylon, too, the prison formed part of the palace (2 Kings xxv. 27). This will account for the prison being here associated with the palace.

The lacuna in *וְהָאֵשׁ* has occasioned great difficulty. First of all, Ganneau as usual does not give the precise dimensions of the hiatus. Then he tells us that the middle of the word has disappeared, and intimates that it may have been caused by an ancient breakage or flaw in the stone. Again in the first text he gave it *וְהָאֵשׁ* whilst in the present recension he gives it *וְהָאֵשׁ* so that it may be questioned whether the *Yod* is actually on the stone. The difficulty has been increased by the fact that *בֵּית מֶלֶךְ* *receptacles of* (from *בָּלַע* to *enclose, to shut up*), which immediately precedes the mutilated word, may either mean an *enclosure* or *receptacle* for water, *i. e.*, *reservoir*, or for criminals, *i. e.* prison. Now though no less than seven suggestions have been hazarded, as to the probable reading, they are in reality only four. We may classify them as follows: *i.* Neubauer suggested *בֵּית מֶלֶךְ* and translated *אֲשֶׁר הָאֵשׁ* *aqueducts*. Virtually Schlottmann's filling up of this lacuna in all his three different variations amounts to the same. Thus he first had *בֵּית מֶלֶךְ* then *בֵּית מֶלֶךְ* and now *בֵּית מֶלֶךְ*, and he renders the whole phrase *Hemmingen (Sperrungen) der Ergiessung für das Wasser*. To the same effect is Haycs *בֵּית מֶלֶךְ* *reservoirs for the outpourings of the waters*; and Kaempff *בֵּית מֶלֶךְ* *reservoirs for the streams of water*. *ii.* Ganneau, Derenbourg, &c., read *בֵּית מֶלֶךְ*, *i. e.*, *the prisons for the men*, and regard the missing letters with the remaining *וְהָאֵשׁ* as describing the locality or crime of the individuals for whom these prisons were made. *iii.* Geiger fills it up with *בֵּית מֶלֶךְ*, points *בֵּית מֶלֶךְ*, takes *בֵּית מֶלֶךְ* as the plural of *בֵּית מֶלֶךְ*, according to the analogy of *בֵּית מֶלֶךְ*, *בֵּית מֶלֶךְ*, and translates it *vessels of fire (worship) for there were none*; and *iv.* Hitzig fills it up with *בֵּית מֶלֶךְ* *the delinquents, criminals* (Comp. Gen. xlii. 21; Ezra x. 19). The last conjecture is the most feasible, not only because

it is the most simple and is not exposed to the objections which the other emendations more or less incur, but suits the context best, and accords with the sense of *בֵּית מֶלֶךְ* in the Hebrew Scriptures which always denotes *prison* (Comp. 2 Kings xxv. 29; Jerem. lii. 33; with 1 Kings xxii. 27; 2 Kings xvii. 4, xxv. 27; 2 Chron. xviii. 26; Isa. xlii. 7—22; Jerem. xxvii. 15) but never *reservoir*. The lacuna of three letters at the end of this line is easily filled up. The letters supplied in the text are generally admitted to be the missing ones.

24. *And there was no cistern, &c.* As empty cisterns were frequently converted into prisons, so that the same word (*בֵּית מֶלֶךְ*) denotes both cistern and prison (Gen. xxxvii. 20, with xl. 15; Exod. xii. 29, the Inscription naturally proceeds from prisons to cisterns. Even in the ordinary eastern cities of Palestine, Syria, &c., it was absolutely necessary to construct reservoirs and cisterns in order to collect water, which can only be obtained during the rainy season of the year. In fortified places which were subject to protracted sieges, such receptacles for water were among the very first things thought of; and great care was taken, by the ruler or commander, that a sufficient number of them should be constructed, since the health and life of the garrison depended mainly upon the supply of water (2 Chron. xxxii. 3, 4; Joseph, *Antiq.* xiii. 8, § 2; *Bel. Jud.*, v. 9, § 4). A very interesting and instructive chapter on Phœnician and Roman cisterns will be found in M. Daux's new work, entitled *Recherches sur l'origine et l'emplacement des Emporia Phœniciens, &c.*, p. 59, &c., Paris, 1869. Mesha, however, not only took care that there should be public cisterns in Korcha, but, indeed, that every private house should have such a tank. In Jerusalem too every private house had its separate cistern (Isa xxxvi. 16), and even to the present day, Robinson tells us, "almost every private house of any size is understood to have at least one or more cisterns, excavated in the soft limestone rock on which the city is built" (*Palestine* i. 324). The phrase *בֵּית מֶלֶךְ* *and there was no cistern within the walls in Korcha*, which is thought to necessitate the rendering of *בֵּית מֶלֶךְ* by *city*, describes an ancient practice of making cisterns in the wall itself for supplying water to the soldiers who defended the walls and the towers. In the Haram wall, which is probably as old as the Moabite Stone "there appears to have been a basin to collect the water. . . It is probable that the troops defending this portion of the wall came down the staircase into this passage to obtain water" (*Recovery of Jerusalem*, p. 165, &c.) In Wilson's notes on the Ordnance Survey of Jerusalem, p. 47, there is an account of the cisterns in the towers. Speaking of the Tower of David he says, "above the solid masonry there is a plinth course, and over this the superstructure which contains several chambers and a cistern; the cistern rests on solid masonry, and is supplied entirely by rainfall." This was communicated to me by W. Morrison, Esq., M.P., who has manifested such indefatigable zeal in the exploration of Palestine. For Josephus' account of the numerous cisterns in the walls and towers of Jerusalem, we must refer to *The Wars*, v. 4 § 3, 4. The lacuna of one letter at the beginning of this line is to be filled up with the article which is absolutely required before *בֵּית מֶלֶךְ* *wall*. For *וְהָאֵשׁ* the future with *Vav* conversive, see line 3, and for the termination *בֵּית מֶלֶךְ* suffix third person masculine, see line 6.

25. *And I dug the ditch, &c.* To make the fortification as safe as possible, Mesha made a ditch around it, which was considered an essential part of the work. "The ditch was sometimes fortified by a sort of tenaille in the ditch itself, or a ravelin on its edge" (Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, s. v. FENCED CITIES). As the making of these ditches was a most menial labour, Mesha employed the Jewish captives in it. In so doing, Mesha takes a malicious pride in stating that the very choice of Israel's soldiers were engaged upon this degrading work. It is somewhat remarkable that the words *בֵּית מֶלֶךְ* should occasion such difficulty, when the simple meaning *I dug the*

26 [I]srael I built Aroer and I made the road across the Arnon,  
 27 I built Beth-Bamoth, for it was destroyed; I built Bezer, for it was cu[t down]  
 28 by the armed m[en] of Dibon, for all Dibon was now loyal; and I reign[ed]

*ditch* (Deutsch, Neubauer, Derenbourg, Nöldeke, Hayes, Schröder, &c.), is indicated by the context and is in accordance with the Biblical usage of these words. Thus *קָדַח*, *I dug*, the preterite of *קָדַח* occurs in Gen. i. 5, whilst *בְּקָדַח*, *a pit, a ditch*, is to be found in Zeph. ii. 9; and Schlottmann himself rightly points out the analogous phrase *בְּקָדַח* which is also used in the structure of fortifications, but which we cannot find. Yet this erudite scholar translates it, *and I decreed a law for Korch against (fraternizing) with Israel*. He takes the phrase in question to denote to enact a decree, fills up the hiatus with *בְּקָדַח* *brotherhood of*, taking the *Beth* in the sense of *against*, and assumes that Mesha thereby abrogated an existing league between the remaining Jewish population and the Moabites similar to that which now exists between Christians and Mohammedans in Kerek. Hitzig again takes it to denote *I have ordered the clearing of the wood*, deriving it from *קָדַח* to cut, and the noun *בְּקָדַח* the object of the cutting down, and says that it was by this felling of the wood that Mesha made the *קָדַח*. For the termination *-ה* suffix, third person masculine, see line 6. The lacuna of four letters at the end of this line is to be filled up with *ש*, which, with *בא*, yields *באש* *with the Yod* to be supplied at the beginning of the next line, yields *בְּקָדַח*, comp. *אִישׁ אֶשְׁרָא* *chosen men of Israel, i.e., as applied to the pick of the army*, 1 Sam. xxvi. 2; also Judg. xx. 24. The filling up of the lacuna with *בְּקָדַח* or *בְּקָדַח* (Neubauer, Wright, &c.) is virtually the same. Beside the mark and far-fetched are *בְּקָדַח* *in the road to Israel* (Hayes), *בְּקָדַח* *in the land of Israel* (Hitzig), *בְּקָדַח* *after I expelled Israel* (Kaempff).

26. *I built Aroer, &c.* From this long description of the building of Korch Mesha passes on to specify his other works, and the next on the list is Aroer. As there are several places in Palestine bearing this name, the Bible distinguishes the Aroer here mentioned by the adjunct "*on the bank of the Arnon*," which was allotted to the tribe of Reuben and Gad (Deut. ii. 36, iii. 12, iv. 48; Josh. xii. 2, xiii. 9—16, &c.). Burckhardt found the ruins, with the name *Arâr* on the old Roman road upon the very edge of the precipitous north bank of the *Wady el Mojeb*, = the Arnon, which quite agrees with the site assigned to it in this Inscription. The lacuna of one letter before *רַע* is to be filled up with *י*, which yields the name *עֵרֵי אֲרֹעַ*.

*And I made the road, &c.* Whilst the merits of all the other structures erected by Mesha, and celebrated in this Inscription, cannot now be ascertained, we can fully appreciate the gigantic labour and the great skill required for the construction of a road across the Arnon. Burckhardt tells that directly opposite the ruins of Arâr = Aroer, situate on the north end of the ravine, there are ruins called *Mehadet el Haj*; and that the width across between these two ruins is about two hours. The descent on the south side to the water occupied Irby one hour and a half, as it is extremely steep. Traces of a paved Roman road are still to be seen on each side of the ravine, and to this day one arch of a bridge, thirty-one feet six inches in span, has survived. (Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, s. v., AROER.) A comparison of the two descriptions will hardly leave any doubt that this old Roman road and old bridge are on the basis of the ancient road and bridge constructed by Mesha, and will at the same time show what an enormous undertaking the making of a road across two such extremely steep and widely separated walls of the river must have been in the days of this Moabite King. That the *ב*, in *בְּקָדַח*, denotes *over*, and not *in the valley at the river*, is evident from the fact, as Nöldeke remarks, "that it would scarcely be possible to make such a road, and from all we know would be quite useless, since the higher parts are far more conveniently passable."

27. *I built Beth Bamoth, &c.* Beth Bamoth is most probably identical with the place mentioned in Numb. xxi. 19; Isa. xv. 2, under the shorter form of Bamoth, and Bamoth-Baal in Numb. xxii. 4; Josh. xiii. 17. From the catalogue of the Moabite cities, in Josh. xiii. 17, where it is allotted to Reuben, it would appear that Bamoth was not

far from Dibon and Beth Baal Meon. In the Authorised Version, Bamoth in Isa. xv. 2, Bamoth-Baal in Numb. xxii. 41, are both translated "*the high places*" and "*the high places of Baal*." Bezer was a city of the Reubenites, set apart by Moses as one of the three cities of refuge, and was allotted to the Merarites (Deut. iv. 43; Josh. xx. 8; xxi. 36; 1 Chron. vi. 78). From the fact that it is described as Bezer, *in the wilderness*, it is concluded that it could not be far from Jahaz. The lacuna of three letters at the end of this line it is difficult to fill up, though the parallelism distinctly shows that a verb denoting the *desertion*, or *abandonment*, is here wanted, since the second clause is plainly a reason for the rebuilding of Bezer, just as the first gives the reason for the building of Bamoth. Schlottmann, who takes the last remaining letter to be *ז*, supplies *ו*, makes it *נָזַר*, and filling up the lacuna at the beginning of the next line with *ש* [בָּה] translates it *for it was conquered (bezungen) by the men of Dibon*. This, indeed, yields the sense required, and the only objection to it is that it destroys the evident parallelism, and the symmetry of the sense, inasmuch as we expect in this clause a verb in the singular, followed by *הָא*, just as in the corresponding clause. As the *ז* may be the remains of *ו* or *י* Derenbourg fills up the lacuna at the end of this, and at the beginning of the next line, with *וְהָא* [בָּה] *for it was deserted; and the chiefs of Dibon were fifty, &c.* This, indeed, preserves the roundness of the sentence in line 27, but deprives the next sentence of all meaning. Kaempff's reading *ש* [בָּה] *I was assisted by the men of*, is exposed to the objection that it is both against the parallelism, and makes Mesha say that he could only effect the rebuilding of Bezer by the armed intervention of the Dibonites; whereas the tenor of the whole, on the contrary, is to show that there was no more any rebellion. Wright's suggestion *ש* [בָּה] *I left behind in it men of, &c.*, gives no reason why Bezer was rebuilt, and is therefore against the evident parallelism of the two clauses. The same objection is to be urged against Hitzig's reading *ש* [בָּה] *the men of Dibon hindered me*. We, therefore, deem it more in harmony with the structure of the sentence to fill up the lacuna with *הָא* *ו*, which yields the requisite sense *הָא* *וְהָא* *for it was cut down*.

28. *By the armed men, &c.* The destruction of both Beth Bamoth and Bezer was effected by a number of armed men who were resident in Dibon. This devastation was evidently committed after the armies of Jehoram were withdrawn from these places. It was then that a number of Gadite soldiers, before quitting Dibon finally, and retiring with the royal troops, determined that nothing but ruins should fall into the hands of Mesha. Mesha says that he could rebuild these ruined places with perfect safety, since all Dibon was now freed of the foreign invaders who occupied and oppressed the land for forty years, and that he had none but loyal subjects in it. The lacuna at the beginning of the line is best filled up with *בא*, which with its *ש* yields *באש* *by the men*, the instruments of this destruction. For the phrase *אֵשׁ דִּבּוֹן*, denoting the plural, see line 10. *חֲמִשָּׁן* may either be the numeral *fifty*, following here the noun, as in *חֲמִשָּׁן יָמֵי יוֹסֵף* *the brethren of Joseph, ten in number*, as in Gen. xlii. 3, and in 1 Kings xviii. 19 (Nöldeke, Derenbourg, Schlottmann, Geiger, Wright, &c.), or it may be *armed*; the *Kal* participle-plural of *הָקַשׁ*, a military expression, which occurs four times in the Old Testament (Exod. xiii. 18; Josh. i. 14; iv. 12; Judg. vii. 11). So Ganneau, Haug, Kaempff, Hitzig, &c. For the plural termination *-ן*, see line 2. *כְּשִׁעָה* *obedience*, the abstract used for the collective of the concrete, *obedient, subject*, is also used in Isa. xi. 14. *וּבְנֵי עַמּוֹן מְשֻׁמְעִים* *and the children of Ammon were obedient to them, i.e., subject*. (Comp. Gesenius, § 107 3, d; Ewald, § 179, c. Hitzig's assertion that *כְּשִׁעָה* is a contraction of *כְּשִׁעָה*, just as *לָלֵחַ* is a contraction of *לָלֵחַ* (1 Sam. iv. 19), from *לָלֵחַ*, from the Arabic *לָלֵחַ* *to be frightened, to struggle, to resist*, and the translation of *כְּשִׁעָה* *by for all Dibon was in rebellion* will not find great favour. The filling up of the lacuna at the end of this line will be discussed in the Commentary on the next line.

29 from Bikran, which I added to my land, and I bui[lt]  
 30 [Beth-Gamul], and Beth-Diblathaim, and Beth-Baal-Meon, and I placed there the p[oor]  
 31 [people of] the land.

29. *From Bikran, &c.* In attempting to fill up the lacuna at the end of the preceding line three facts must be borne in mind. *i.* That three or four letters only are missing. *ii.* That according to Ganneau's statement the beginning of this is complete; and, *iii.* That line 29 commences with בִּמְרָן. This is corroborated by the fragment of the stone itself, which is in Captain Warren's possession. This being the case, all the fillings up hitherto proposed, viz., וְאֶתְּ בִּמְרָן אֶתְּ הַמְּלָכִים, and I constructed fortresses in the towns, (Neubauer, Wright, Kaempf, &c.); וְאֶתְּ בִּמְרָן אֶתְּ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶתְּ בִּמְרָן I filled with inhabitants Bikran, (Schlottmann); וְאֶתְּ בִּמְרָן אֶתְּ מֶלֶךְ אֶתְּ בִּמְרָן I reigned over Bikran, (Derenbourg); וְאֶתְּ בִּמְרָן אֶתְּ מֶלֶךְ אֶתְּ בִּמְרָן I saved from my enemies Bikran, (Ginsburg); וְאֶתְּ בִּמְרָן אֶתְּ מֶלֶךְ אֶתְּ בִּמְרָן and I settled down opposite Bezer to look at the horn, (Hitzig), these conjectures, one and all, must now be relinquished. As the two remaining letters are the fragment of a verb, first person singular preterite, which is evident from the fact that אֶתְּ is invariably followed by it in all the twelve instances in which it occurs, except line 1, where the nature of the sentence precludes it; and, moreover, as there are only seven verbs in the Hebrew language which begin with בִּמְרָן our choice is restricted. The seven verbs are as follows:—1. בִּמְרָן to fill; 2. בִּמְרָן to vanish, to pulverize; 3. בִּמְרָן to escape; 4. בִּמְרָן to rule; 5. בִּמְרָן to speak; 6. בִּמְרָן to be sweet; 7. בִּמְרָן to wring off. We are, therefore, driven to make a preterite first person masculine of one of these, and obtain the best sense we can with the words at the beginning of the next line, which are dependent upon this active verb. Of these seven verbs only three can be pressed into its service, viz., Nos. 1, 3, and 5. The other four yield no sense here. Now, with preterite first person singular from these roots, only two constructions seem possible, either וְאֶתְּ בִּמְרָן אֶתְּ בִּמְרָן I saved a hundred oxen, which I added to the land, or וְאֶתְּ בִּמְרָן אֶתְּ בִּמְרָן I reigned from Bikran, which I annexed to the land. No one, it is to be presumed, will adopt the former. The latter yields good sense, and is in harmony with the context. As Mesha stated in the preceding sentence that all Dibon was now loyal, the invaders having all been expelled, he adds still further, that his sway now extended as far as Bikran, which he had wrenched from the enemy, and annexed to his dominions. בִּמְרָן is the name of a city, and according to the sense corresponds to עֲבֵלִים, which is taken to be identical with עֲבֵלִים Isa. xv. 8, see Henderson's *Commentary on Isaiah*, on this passage. Names of cities denoting animals are very common in countries occupied by nomadic tribes. The lacuna at the end of this line should evidently be filled up with י, which, with the two letters in the text, yields I built.

30. *Beth-Gamul, &c.* The lacunæ at the beginning of this line is most probably to be filled up with בֵּת גַּמּוּל, Beth-Gamul, since there cannot be a shadow of a doubt, from the verb which precedes it, and

from the *Vav* conjunctive which follows it, that a proper name is missing, and since this place is grouped together with Beth-Diblathaim, and Beth-Baal-Meon in the catalogue of Moabite cities given in Jerem. xlviii. 23. I am glad to find that Kaempf has come to the same conclusion. Of Beth-Gamul nothing certain is known. It is omitted in the lists of the Moabite cities given in Numb. xxxii. 34—38; Josh. xiii. 16—20; and it is therefore supposed that it was built after this date. Equally difficult is it to determine the site of Beth-Diblathaim, which is also only mentioned in Jerem. xlviii. 22, though some suppose it is identified with Almon-Diblathaim, one of the stations of the Israelites, between Dibon and Nebo, mentioned in Numb. xxxiii. 46, 47. Beth-Baal-Meon is generally taken to be identical with Baal-Meon (Comp. Kitto's *Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature*; Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, s. v.). Against this, however, seems to be the fact, that in line 9 it is stated, "I built Baal-Meon," and to repeat here again I built Baal-Meon, would be needless tautology, for which there is not a single parallel in the whole Inscription. Wright's remark that "there the name occurred incidentally whilst Mesha was speaking of his campaign against Israel, and consequently there is nothing surprising in a repetition of it here, where he is specifying what he did for the various cities of his newly acquired territory," assumes the very point in dispute. The name is no more incidental there than it is here. Besides, if Baal-Meon is incidental, Kirjathaim, the building of which Mesha mentions in connection with it (line 10) must surely also be incidental, and ought therefore according to Wright's view be also repeated here, where Mesha specifies what he did for the various cities of his newly-acquired territory. The phrase וְאֶתְּ בִּמְרָן אֶתְּ בִּמְרָן and I placed therein, makes it certain that the lacuna at the end of this line is to be filled up with a noun. As the missing noun cannot have the article after the accusative אֶתְּ it must be in the construct to agree with הָעָרִים. Now line 20, where exactly the same verb is used, and where the same fact is recorded, viz., the re-peopling of his newly-acquired cities, Mesha tells us that he did it with the poor and homeless people. The lacuna therefore of the few letters at the end of this line and at the beginning of the next line is most probably to be filled up with הָעָרִים הָפְּרוֹת the poor of the land, or if the space of the hiatus will admit of it הָעָרִים הָפְּרוֹת הָעָרִים the poor people of the land. Hitzig's reading הָעָרִים הָפְּרוֹת הָעָרִים the poor of the people, all the beggars of the land, requires too much space, for it must be remembered that this line is shorter since with it the rounding at the bottom of the Stone begins. Kaempf, who has alighted upon the same idea, reads הָעָרִים הָפְּרוֹת אֶתְּ אֶתְּ אֶתְּ I led to it the two hundred men to occupy the land. But this filling up not only requires more space than the lacuna yields, but implies that there were only two hundred beggars in Moab, and that when new places had to be colonised, Mesha had to carry the same poor people from place to place.



## PART III.

THE THIRD PART, 31 *b*—34, records his successful wars against the Horonaim, or the Edomites, which he undertook by the express command of Chemosh.

31 And as to Horonaim [the men of Edom] dwelt therein [on the descent from of old]

32 And Chemosh said to me, Go down, make war against Horonaim, and ta[ke it. And I assaulted it]

31 *b*. *And as to Horonaim, &c.* It is greatly to be regretted that the four last lines of this Inscription, in which Mesha celebrates his conquests over another enemy, who invaded and occupied a different part of his dominion, are mutilated and very difficult of restoration. The enemy's name is unfortunately amongst the missing words. The mention, however, of the city which he occupied, and which the oracle of Chemosh told Mesha to reconquer, gives us some clue to the nationality of this invader. From the fact that Horonaim is grouped together with Moabite cities on the south of the Arnon (Isa. xv. 5; Jerem. xlviii. 34), that Josephus puts it in juxtaposition with *Zōapa* and *Opōvai* (*Antiq.* xiv. 1, § 4; with xiii. 15, § 4), and that it is not mentioned in the historical books of the Old Testament, which extensively notice the northern Moab, but very scantily refer to the southern part, it is generally concluded that it was a south Arnonic city, and on the borders of Edom. This renders it almost certain that the enemies who occupied it were the Edomites; and derives collateral proof from a combination of the record in 2 Kings iii. 9, with the Moabite Stone. The Inscription distinctly tells us that it was Omri who resubjugated Moab. It is, therefore, only natural to conclude that to effect this conquest, he, on that occasion, as in the case of his successor, who is mentioned in 2 Kings iii., called in the help of Edom, and that as a reward for this assistance the King of Israel aided the monarch of Edom to take Horonaim, which was situate on the south of the Arnon. We believe, therefore, that when Mesha revolted against the King of Israel, he must necessarily have revolted also against Edom. This hypothesis explains the readiness of Edom to join the King of Israel in his march against Moab, in the time of Ahab. Now that Mesha had defeated and expelled the Israelites from the northern, it was but natural that he should at once resolve to free the southern part of Moab, and it is probable that the lost portion of the Inscription shows that he executed his purpose.

In accordance with this interpretation, we cannot do better than adopt Hitzig's filling up of the lacuna at the end of the line. הָרִנַּיִם, like הָרִנַּיִם in lines 4-5, is the nominative absolute. After the pronoun הָ, which requires a more specific term to qualify the locality, Hitzig ingeniously supplies בֵּית, which with *Beth* and *Vav*, the two remaining letters of the text, yield בֵּית־בְּנֵי in the descent, and which is the very word used with Horonaim in Jerem. xlviii. 5. Kaempf, indeed, rejects the identification of הָרִנַּיִם with Horonaim for the following reasons:—*i*. It makes the narrator pass over suddenly and unexpectedly from the north to the south; *ii*. The construction of the sentence is thereby made confused; and, *iii*. Horonaim is defective in the Bible (Isa. xv. 5; Jerem. xlviii. 5), and it would be very strange if it were here written plene, and that in both instances. Kaempf therefore points it הָרִנַּיִם, and identifies it with Hauran in Ezek. xlvii. 16, 18, which he takes to be in the north of Moab. He fills up the lacuna with . . . הָרִנַּיִם [הָרִנַּיִם], "And Hauranites dwelt therein in safety and they built . . .," and refers the relative pronoun "therein" to Beth-Baal-Meon, viz., Mesha hereby states that the Hauranites occupied Beth-Baal-Meon before he conquered it. To this, however, is to be replied that the transition is in perfect harmony with the record of a new event, and is similar to that in line 21; that the construction is far more natural than that in lines 4-5, and is of frequent occurrence in the Hebrew Scriptures (comp. Gesenius, § 146; Ewald, § 309); and that to refer הָ to the singular to Beth-Baal-Meon alone, when two other places, viz., Beth-Gamul and Beth-Diblathaim, are intimately and coordinately associated with it, is far more forced than the construction to which Kaempf takes exception. As to the *mater lectionis*, though it is true that Horonaim which occurs four times in the Bible (Isa. xv.

5; Jerem. xlviii. 3, 5, 34) is defective, yet this only applies to the first *Vav*, as in two instances the second *Vav* is plene (Jerem. xlviii. in the margin, and xlviii. 5). Indeed, no argument can be drawn from the spelling of this proper name in the present recensions of the Hebrew text, since in some MSS. it is actually spelled as in the Moabite Stone, as may be seen in the *Minchath Shai* on these passages. This is fully borne out by my own collation of the MSS. Besides, not only does הָרִנַּיִם *Hauranites* the plural not occur in the Hebrew, as in the two instances in which this word is used (Ezek. xlvii. 16, 18) it is הָרִנַּיִם the singular, but this interpretation compels Kaempf to regard the verb יָשַׁב as the plural, contrary to the analogy of יָשַׁב (line 24) and the uniform diction of the Inscription. Indeed, Kaempf seems to have felt this harshness, since he actually thinks it possible that the text should be הָרִנַּיִם in the singular.

32. *And Chemosh said, &c.* Having stated in the preceding line that the enemy occupied the district south of the Arnon, Mesha tells us that Chemosh who mercifully aided him to expel the invaders from the north, now commanded him to drive the hostile occupants out of the south. As in line 14, the phrase "and Chemosh said to me" shows that a considerable interval of repose had elapsed between the last fighting and the resumption of hostilities. Indeed, the chronological order in which the events are recorded on this Stone would of itself show that Mesha had enjoyed a long period of repose before he engaged his southern enemy, since the buildings and repairs which he effected and which are described in lines 21—31a must necessarily have taken him some time to execute. This affords additional evidence that there is a break between the rebuilding and colonization of the three cities, viz., Beth-Gamul, Beth-Diblathaim, and Beth-Baal-Meon, and the taking of Horonaim. The lacuna at the beginning of this line is easily supplied. The remaining three letters show that *Vav* and *Yod* are missing, which with the *Aleph*, *Mem*, and *Resh* in the text yield וַיֹּאמֶר and he said. As this line corresponds to line 3, which contains between eight and nine words, or about thirty-two letters, and moreover as this line with the filling up of the two letters at the beginning contains six and a half words, or twenty-five letters, the lacuna at the end can only consist of two words, or about seven or eight letters. Coupling this fact with the command of Chemosh to Mesha to go and attack Horonaim, and with Mesha's conduct when a similar oracle spoke to him (line 14), we can have no doubt that the missing words expressed his obedience, i.e., הָרִנַּיִם and I fought against it.

33. *And I took it, &c.* As the command to attack Horonaim came direct from Chemosh, there can hardly be any doubt that the battle was successful to Mesha, or it would not be recorded on the Stone which celebrates his victories and achievements. Hence the missing word at the beginning of this line most probably is וַיֹּאמֶר and I took it, which is supported by line 11. We have seen that throughout the Inscription Mesha describes every success as having been effected by the direct interposition of his God Chemosh. It is therefore most probable that the *He* is the remainder of the verb הָשִׁיב and he restored it, which expresses Mesha's feelings and language under such circumstances. If the space would allow it, we should prefer filling it up with הָרִנַּיִם [הָרִנַּיִם] for he had mercy on it (comp. lines 8-9). As this line which corresponds to line 20 must originally have had about eight words, or about twenty-eight letters, and as moreover the filling up at the beginning and the remaining words and letters consist of five words and a half, making a sum total of twenty-two

33 [And I took it for] Chemosh [restored it] in my days. Wherefore I ma[de] . . .

34 year . . . and I . . .

letters, all that this line will now admit is the completion of the half word and the insertion of a bi-literal expression. We therefore insert נ after ועל, and with Kaempf supply *Tav, Yod*, after the *Ayin* and *Shin*, thus making it עשתי. Accordingly the words are [על]עשתי and for this reason I made. The fact that this is the finishing up of the Inscription favours this filling up, since it is to be expected that Mesha would give the date of the monument.

34. This line, which corresponds to line one, and must therefore have consisted of about six or seven words and twenty-one letters, has only six letters. As has already been indicated, the missing and mutilated words most probably gave the date when Mesha erected this Triumphal Pillar. The word נז, therefore, may be taken to denote *year*, as in line eight. It may be that Mesha erected this Stone in the thirteenth year of his sovereignty, which was the period of his father's dominion, in acknowledgment of his gratitude to Chemosh, who not only delivered him from all his enemies, but permitted him to reach the years of his father's reign. All this, however, is simply speculation, and I must confess my inability to fill up almost an entire line. Kaempf and Hitzig, of all the expounders of this Inscription, are the only two scholars who had the courage to supply the missing line. To understand their emendation, we shall have to give their respective readings of the last three lines. Kaempf reads them as follows:—

32 [וי]קר לי כמש • רר הלחם בחורני וא[ר]ואה  
33 ואחזק נישב[ה] כמש ב[י]מי ועל [מ]עשתי את-הקבצ ואת בקרעה •  
34 ועשה עם קב[צ] ש[ב]נו ק וא[ר]ואה

32. *And Chemosh said to me, Go down, make war against the Hauranites, and attack Beth-Baal-Meon; and I went down and made war,*  
33. *And I attacked it, and Chemosh restored it in my days. And, therefore I made this High Place to Chemosh, upon the barren mount.*  
34. *And now ye people of Chemosh be strong and valiant!*

Whereas Hitzig supplies it as follows:—

32 [וי]קר לי כמש רר הלחם בחורני וא[ר]ואה  
33 [זה]ואש דבן אנך ב[ה] כמש בימי ועל [מ]עשתי עש[ק] רי  
34 [פר] לי לך אחזק את דבן ואלתחם בה בע[ש]ת [חז]ק וא[ר]ואה •

32. *And Chemosh said to me, Go down, make war against Horonaim, and I [went down and took it].*  
33. *[And as to the men of Dibon], Chemosh [was angry with] them in my days, and also about [the trib]ute [which they exacted, and he]*  
34. *Said [to me, Go take Dibon, and I fought against it since I exercised power] and [took it].*

Of course, any one that can write Hebrew might with equal authority supply lines 33 and 34, according to what he believes to be wanting. We, however, question the wisdom of doing it, inasmuch as it shakes the faith of ordinary people in higher criticisms. It is to be hoped that some of the pieces of the Stone may still be procured, and that the last lines will utter a more certain voice.



PROFESSOR NOELDEKE.

"1. Ich bin Mesa, Sohn des Kamos . . . . . König von Moab [aus  
 "2. Dibon]. Mein Vater hat geherrscht über Moab  
 30 Jahre, und ich habe ge-  
 "3. herrscht nach meinem Vater und diesen Altar dem  
 Kamos angelegt auf der Fläche . . .  
 "4. weil er mir half aus allen Nöthen (?) und weil er  
 mich sehn liess das Unglück aller meiner Feinde. [Es  
 erhob sich (?) Om-  
 "5. ri], König von Israel, und drückte Moab lange  
 Tage, da Kamos zürnte auf [sein  
 "6. Land]. Und ihm folgte sein Sohn und sprach  
 gleichfalls: „ich will Moab drücken.“ In meinen Tagen  
 sprach er . . . .  
 "7. und ich sah sein und seines Hauses Unglück, und  
 Israel geht auf ewig zu Grunde. Und Omri nahm ein  
 [das Land?]  
 "8. Medaba und er lag darin . . . . . sein Sohn  
 40 Jahre lang, [und zurück  
 "9. gab es] Kamos in meinen Tagen. Und ich baute  
 Baal Meon und legte darin an . . . . Und ich . . . .  
 "10. Kirjathaim, aber die Männer von Gad [wohnten]  
 im Lande [Kirjathaim?] von Urzeit her. Und es baute  
 sich der König  
 "11. von Israel [Kirjathaim?], und ich stritt wider  
 die Ringmauer und nahm sie ein und brachte um Alle,  
 [die da  
 "12. lagen in] der Ringmauer zur Augenweide für  
 Kamos und Moab. Und ich führte von dort zurück . . .  
 "13. . . . sie vor Kamos in Kerioth. Und ich legte  
 in sie die Männer von Saron (?) und die Männer von . . .  
 "14. . . . Und Kamos sprach zu mir: „geh und nimm  
 Nebo Israel ab“. [Und ich . . . .]  
 "15. ging in der Nacht und stritt dagegen vom Anbruch  
 des Morgengrauens bis Mittag, und ich . . . . .  
 "16. . . . und ich brachte um sie ganz, siebentausend,  
 . . . .  
 "17. . . . denn dem Astar-Kamos ward es (zur  
 Vernichtung) geweiht . . . Und ich nahm von dort  
 "18. [die Geräthe] Jahve's und [brachte sie dar] dem  
 Kamos. Und der König von Israel baute  
 "19. Jahaz und legte sich hinein bei seinem Streit  
 wider mich, und Kamos vertrieb ihn [vor mir.  
 "20. Und] ich nahm aus Moab 200 Mann, all seine  
 Häupter, und führte sie nach Jahaz hinauf und nahm es  
 "21. . . . nach Dibon. Ich habe gebaut die Fläche,  
 die Mauer der Waldhöhen und die Mauer  
 "22. . . . Und ich habe gebaut seine Thore, und ich  
 habe gebaut seine Thürme, und  
 "23. ich habe gebaut den Königspalast, und ich habe  
 angelegt die Vorrathshäuser (?) . . . . [innerhalb  
 "24. der] Ringmauer auf der Fläche; da sprach ich zu  
 allem Volk: „legt euch  
 "25. Jedermann eine Cisterne in seinem Hause an.“  
 Und ich habe den Graben (?) für die Fläche gegraben  
 beim . . . .  
 "26. Israel's. Ich habe gebaut Aroer, und ich habe  
 angelegt die Strasse über den Arnon.  
 "27. Ich habe gebaut Beth Bamoth, denn es war  
 zerstört, und ich habe gebaut Bezer, denn . . . .  
 "28. . . . [von den Männern] Dibon's fünfzig, denn  
 ganz Dibon war unterthänig. Und ich habe . . . .  
 "29. . . . die Rinder, die ich gesammelt hatte auf  
 der Erde. Und ich habe gebaut . . . .  
 "30. . . . und Beth Diblathaim und Beth Baal Meon  
 und führte hinauf dorthin  
 "31. . . . des Landes und Horonaim, darin lag . . .  
 "32. . . . Und es sprach zu mir Kamos: „[komm],  
 streite wider Horonaim“. Und ich . . . .  
 "33. . . . es Kamos in meinen Tagen und . . .

PROFESSOR HAUG.

"1. Ich bin Mescha, der Sohn des Kamosch [nadab],  
 König von Moab . . .  
 "2. Mein Vater war König über Moab dreissig Jahre,  
 und ich war König  
 "3. nach meinen Vater. Und ich machte diese  
 Höhen (Heilighüther) für Kamosch auf dem Marktplatz  
 . . . [Deszwegen heisse ich] Mescha (der Gerettete)  
 "4. weil er mich von allen Gefahren errettet hat und  
 mich hat triumphiren lassen über alle meine Hassler . .  
 "5. den König von Israel. Als er Moab unterdrückte  
 lange Zeit, da entbrannte der Zorn des Kamosch.  
 "6. Und es folgte ihm nach sein Sohn, und auch  
 er sprach: Ich will Moab unterdrücken. In meinen  
 Tagen sprach er (Kamosch)  
 "7. das ich mich seiner und seines Hauses freuen  
 solle. Und Israel war vordem ganz verloren; da nahm  
 Omri Besitz von  
 "8. . . Mehdeba und wohnte darin. [Und sie unter-  
 drückten Moab, er und] sein Sohn vierzig Jahre; [aber  
 gross ward]  
 "9. Kamosch in meinen Tagen. Und ich baute Baal-  
 Meon und opferte (?) darin. Und ich baute  
 "10. Kirjathaim. Und die Gaditer (wahren) im Lande  
 . . . von Alters her, und bauten für den König von  
 "11. Israel . . . Und ich stritt wider die Stadt und  
 nahm sie. Und ich tödtete [alle Männer der]  
 "12. Stadt zum Wohlgefallen für Kamosch und Moab  
 . . .  
 "13. vor Kamosch zu Kirjath, und ich führte die  
 Häupter darin gefangen weg . . .  
 "14. Und es sagte zu mir Kamosch: Gehe, nimm die  
 Statthalterschaft über Israel.  
 "15. Ich ging bei Nacht und stritt mit ihm vom  
 Anbruch der Morgenröthe bis zum Mittag;  
 "16. und ich tödtete alle 7,000 . . .  
 "17. denn dem Ashtar Kamosch weihte [ich sie]  
 Und ich nahm von da . . .  
 "18. des Jahveh (Jehovah) [und brachte] sie vor  
 Kamosch. Und der König von Israel (kam nach)  
 "19. Jahaz und wohnte daselbst, als er mit mir stritt.  
 Und Kamosch vertrieb ihn von . .  
 "20. Ich nahm von Moab zweihundert Männer, alle  
 seine Häupter und führte sie nach Jahaz, und ich (nahm  
 es) . . .  
 "21. Zu Dibon. Ich errichtete einen Marktplatz und  
 baute die Mauern von Jearim und die Mauern von . . .  
 "22. Und ich baute ihre Thore, und ich baute ihren  
 Thurm . . .  
 "23. Ich baute Beth-Moloch. Und ich sonderte die  
 Menschen ab (schloss sie in der Stadt ein) . . .  
 "24. Und im Innern der Stadt war kein Brunnen auf  
 dem Marktplatz; und ich sagte zu allem Volk: Machet  
 "25. ein jeder einen Brunnen in seinem Haus. Und  
 ich hieb nieder was niederzuhauen war (an Bäumen) für  
 den Marktplatz (um ihn herzustellen) . . .  
 "26. Israel. Ich baute Aroer (?), und ich machte den  
 Weg am Arnon.  
 "27. Ich baute Beth-Bamoth, denn es war zerstört.  
 Ich baute eine Festung dass ich einschliesse  
 "28. [in] Dibon die Erlesensten, dass ganz Dibon  
 gehorchte. Und ich war König (?) . .  
 "29. in den Städten welche ich zu dem Lande fügte.  
 Und ich baute . . .  
 "30. und Beth-Diblathaim, und Beth-Baal Meon;  
 und ich errichtete dort . . .  
 "31. . . das Land. Und Horonaim, wo wohnte . . .  
 "32. Es sprach zu mir Kamosch: streite wider Horonaim . . .  
 "33. . . . Kamosch in meinen Tagen . . .

DR. GEIGER.

"1. Ich, Mescha', Sohn des Khamosch Gad, König  
 von Moab, der Di-  
 "2. bonite. Mein Vater regierte über Moab 30 Jahre  
 und ich regierte  
 "3. nach meinem Vater. Und ich habe diese Anhöhe  
 dem Kamosch errichtet bekorchah  
 "4. Mescha', weil er mich befreit hat von allen  
 Königen (?) und weil er mich hat Untergang erblicken  
 lassen aller meiner Feinde . . .  
 "5. Den König Israel's; sie bedrückten Moab viele  
 Tage, denn Khamosch war zornig wider sein Land.  
 "6. Ihm folgte sein Sohn, und auch er sprach:  
 Peinigt Moab in den Tagen (?)  
 "7. Ich aber schaute Rache an ihm und seinem  
 Hanse, und Israel sank in ewigen Untergang. Omri  
 hatte erobert  
 "8. Medeba und blieb daselbst [er, sein Sohn und  
 der Sohn] seines Sohnes 40 Jahre.  
 "9. [Nun weilt] Khamosch darin in meinen Tagen.  
 Ich richtete nun auf Baal-Meon, befestigte die Grund-  
 mauer, baute auf  
 "10. Kirjathaim. Die Männer von Gad hatten von  
 jeher dort gewohnt. Es hatte sich erbaut der König  
 "11. Israel's Ataroth. Ich bekriegte die Stadt [Kir']  
 nahm sie ein, erschlug alle [Bewohner] der  
 "12. Stadt zum wohlgefälligen Opfer dem Khamosch  
 und Moab, ich nahm gefangen  
 "13. und schleifte ihn vor Khamosch in Karioth, und  
 ich setzte dorthin die Männer von Schofan und ?  
 "14. ? Und Khamosch sprach zu mir: Geh, erobre  
 Nebo wider Israel.  
 "15. Ich ging des Nachts und bekämpfte es vom  
 Aufgange der Morgenröthe bis zum Mittag und ich  
 [eroberte]  
 "16. es ganz und erschlug Alles, sieben tausend [mit]  
 vornehmen Frauen  
 "17. [und] Jungfrauen, denn Astar-Khamosch ist der  
 Bann . . . und ich nahm von dort  
 "18. die Gefässe Jhvh's und schleifte sie vor  
 Khamosch, und der König Israel's war in  
 "19. Jahaz und erhielt sich dort, indem er mit mir  
 kämpfte, aber Khamosch vertrieb ihn vor [mir].  
 "20. Ich nahm von Moab 200 Mann, alles Häupter  
 und führte sie an gegen Jahaz, nahm es ein,  
 "21. es zu Dibon hinzufügend. Ich errichtete nun  
 "Korchah" die Mauer der Wälder und die Mauer  
 "22. . . . ich errichtete ihre Thore, ihre Thürme  
 und  
 "23. ich baute ein Haus für den Moloch und liess die  
 Feuergeräte anfertigen, [denn es waren solche] nicht  
 in der  
 "24. Stadt; auch Brunnen waren nicht in der Stadt,  
 in "Korchah" und ich sprach zum ganzen Volke:  
 machet  
 "25. ein Jeder einen Brunnen in seinem Hause, ich  
 grub nun den Graben für "Korchah" . . .  
 "26. Israel. Ich habe Aroer aufgerichtet, die Wege  
 angelegt am Arnon,  
 "27. habe Beth-Bamoth errichtet, das zerstört war,  
 habe Bezer angebaut, denn . . .  
 "28. . . . Dibon fünfzig (?) denn ganz Dibon war  
 hörig.  
 "29. . . . "Bkrm" (?) welche ich dem Lande hinzuge-  
 fügt, ich erbaute  
 "30. . . . und Beth-Diblathaim und Beth Baal Meon,  
 und erhob . . .  
 "31. . . . das Land und Horonaim, dort wohnte . . .  
 und  
 "32. . . . Khamosch sprach zu mir: Steige hinab,  
 bekämpfe Horonaim, und ich . . .  
 "33. . . . Khamosch in meinen Tagen, und über  
 "34. . . . . . . . .

M. GANNEAU.

"1. Moi, je suis Mesa, fils de Chamosgad, roi de Moab, le  
 "2. Dibonite. Mon père a régné sur Moab trente années, et moi j'ai  
 "3. régné après mon père. Et j'ai construit ce sanctuaire pour Chamos dans Qarha,  
 "4. [sanctuaire du salut], car il m'a sauvé de tous les agresseurs et m'a fait voir avec mépris tous mes ennemis.  
 "5. Omri fut roi d'Israël et opprima Moab pendant de longs jours, aussi Chamos s'irrita de ses agressions.  
 "6. Et son fils lui succéda, et il dit, lui aussi: 'j'opprimerai Moab.' Dans mes jours, je dis:  
 "7. 'je le... et je le visiterai lui et sa maison,' et Israël fut ruiné ruiné pour toujours. Omri s'était emparé de la terre de  
 "8. Me-deba. Et il y demeura. . . [Achab] son fils vécut quarante ans,  
 "9. et Chamos l'a fait périr de mon temps. Alors je bâtis Baal Meon et je construisis  
 "10. Qiriat-haïm. Et les hommes de Gad demeuraient dans le pays d'[Ataroth] depuis longtemps,  
 "11. et le roi d'Israël avait construit pour lui la ville d'Ataroth. J'attaquai la ville et je la pris, et je tuai tout le peuple de la terre de  
 "12. en spectacle à Chamos et à Moab, et j'emportai de là le . . .  
 "13. et je le traînai à terre devant la face de Chamos, à Qerioth, et j'y transportai les hommes de Saron (ou de Chofen) et les hommes  
 "14. de Maharouth (?). Et Chamos me dit: 'Va! prends Nébah sur Israël.'  
 "15. J'allai de nuit, et je combattis contre la ville depuis le lever de l'aube jusqu'à midi, et je  
 "16. la pris: et je tuai tout, sept mille [hommes: et j'emmenai avec moi]  
 "17. les femmes et les jeunes filles, car Astar Chamos appartient la consécration des femmes, et j'emportai de là les vases  
 "18. de Jéhovah et je les traînai à terre devant la face de Chamos. Et le roi d'Israël avait bâti  
 "19. Yahas et y résidait lors de sa guerre contre moi. Et Chamos le chassa de devant sa face:  
 "20. je pris de Moab deux cents hommes en tout. Je les fis monter à Yahas, et je la pris  
 "21. pour l'annexer à Dibon. C'est moi qui ai construit Qarha, le mur des forêts et le mur de la colline.  
 "22. J'ai bâti ses portes, et j'ai bâti ses tours.  
 "23. J'ai bâti le palais du roi, et j'ai construit les prisons de . . . dans le milieu  
 "24. de la ville. Et il n'y avait pas de puits dans l'intérieur de la ville, dans Qarha; et je dis à tout le peuple: 'Faites  
 "25. vous chacun un puits dans sa maison,' et j'ai creusé les citernes (ou les fossés) pour Qarha, pour  
 "26. . . . d'Israël. C'est moi qui ai construit Aroër, et qui ai fait la route de l'Arnon.  
 "27. C'est moi qui ai construit Beth-Bamoth, qui était détruite. C'est moi qui ai construit Bosor, qui [est puissante]  
 "28. . . . Dibon, des chefs militaires, car tout Dibon était soumis. Et j'ai rempli  
 "29. . . . avec les villes que j'ai ajoutées à la terre (de Moab). C'est moi qui ai construit . . .  
 "30. . . . Beth-Diblat-haïm, et Beth-Baal-Meon et j'ai élevé là le . . .  
 "31. . . . la terre. Et Horonaim, il y résida avec . . .  
 "32. . . . Et Chamos me dit: 'Descends et combats contre Horonaim.' . . .  
 "33. . . . Chamos, dans mes jours . . .  
 "34. . . . l'année . . .

M. DERENBOURG.

"1. Moi, Mescha, fils de Kemosh [nadab], roi de Moab [fils] de  
 "2. Libni. Mon père régna sur Moab pendant trente ans, et j'ai succédé  
 "3. à mon père dans ce royaume. J'ai construit ce haut-lieu en l'honneur de Kemosh, dans la citadelle. [Haut-lieu de  
 "4. Méscha, parce que Dieu m'a délivré (hōscha) de tous les pillards, et m'a permis de regarder avec indifférence tous mes ennemis [il était venu Om  
 "5. rî, roi d'Israël, et il humilia Moab longtemps. Mais Kemosh s'irrita contre lui [et l'  
 "6. extermina. Son fils lui succéda, et lui aussi dit: Je veux humilier Moab. Tant que je vivrai, je le tourmenterai,  
 "7. et je ferai du mal à Moab et à ses villes. Israël avait détruit Almon, et Omri avait pris possession de  
 "8. Mahdêbar; il y résida, [ainsi qu'Achab,] son fils, pendant quarante ans. Mais  
 "9. Kemosh [redevint favorable] à Moab, pendant ma vie. Je bâtis Baal Maôn, et j'y agis selon ma volonté. . . Je bâtis aussi  
 "10. Qiriat-haïm. Les hommes de la tribu de Gad [habitent] dans le pays; [ils vinrent] d'Almon, et le roi d'Israël  
 "11. leur bâtit la [forteresse]. J'attaquai Qir et le pris. Je tuai tous ceux qui habitaient  
 "12. Qir, pour plaire à Kemosh et à Moab. Je revins  
 "13. de là... devant Kemosh à Qiriot. J'y restai avec les hommes de Schiran et avec les hommes de . . Schaharat (?).  
 "14. Alors Kemosh me dit: Va, prends Nebô aux Israélites.  
 "15. Je marchai la nuit et je combattis depuis la pointe du jour jusqu'à midi. Je [pris] la  
 "16. ville et je tuai tous les habitants, sept mille . . .  
 "17. car je les consacrai à Ashtor Kemosh . . . J'y pris les  
 "18. vases de Jéhovah et les [deposai] devant Kemosh. Et le roi d'Israël [avança  
 "19. jusqu'à] Iahatz, et s'y établit en me combattant. Mais Kemosh le chassa de [Iahatz,  
 "20. et] je pris de Moab deux cents hommes, tous les chefs. Je tombai avec tumulte sur Iahatz, et m'en emparai.  
 "21. [Je me décidai à monter] vers Dibon. Je bâtis une citadelle les murs de Yearim et le mur de  
 "22. Hou [tzôt]. J'en construisis les portes et j'en construisis les tours. Et  
 "23. je construisis le palais. Et je construisis les prisons pour les hommes... dans l'intérieur de  
 "24. la ville. Il n'y avait pas de citerne dans l'intérieur de la ville, dans la citadelle; je dis donc à tout le peuple: Faites-vous  
 "25. chacun une citerne dans sa maison. Je creusai encore le fossé pour la citadelle dans . . d'  
 "26. Israël. Je bâtis [Aro] ér, et j'établis les routes vers l'Arnon.  
 "27. Je bâtis Bêt-Bamôt, qui était dévastée, et je bâtis Betzer, qui était abandonnée.  
 "28. [Et les chefs] de Dibon étaient au nombre de cinquante, car tout Dibon est soumis. Je règne  
 "29. sur Baqrân, que j'ai ajoutée, à mon pays. Je bâtis . . .  
 "30. et Bêt-Dibbatân. Et Bêt-Baal-Meon, ou je transportai la . . . du  
 "31. pays. A Havranân était établi B . . et . .  
 "32. Or, Kemosh me dit: Va, fais la guerre à Havranân. Et je [pris cette ville . . .  
 "33. ] Kemosh dans mes jours . . ."  
 "34. . . .

PROFESSOR SCHLOTTMAN.

"1. Ich Mesa, Sohn des Kamosgad, König von Moab der Di-  
 "2. bonite. Mein Vater herrschte über Moab 30 Jahre, und ich herrsch-  
 "3. te nach meinem Vater. Und ich machte diese Opferhöhe dem Kamos, eine Höhe der Er-  
 "4. rettung, denn er errettete mich von allen Feinden, und liess mich meine Lust sehen an allen meinen Hassern. Omri  
 "5. der König von Israel—der bedrückte Moab viele Tage, denn es zürnte Kamos wider sein Land.  
 "6. Und es folgte ihm sein Sohn und es sprach auch der: 'Ich will Moab bedrücken.' In meinen Tagen sprach Kamos  
 "7. So willich denn Moab und seinen Tempel ansehen und Israel geht unter in ewigem Untergang. Und es bemächtigte sich Omri des Landes  
 "8. Medeba. [Und es sass Israel darinnen in seinen Tagen und in] seines Sohnes Tagen vierzig Jahre. Da sah  
 "9. Kamos Moab gnädig an in meinen Tagen. Und ich baute Baal Meon und machte daran den Graben. Und ich baute  
 "10. die Stadt Kirjathaim: und die Männer von Gad [wohnten] in dem Bezirk [von Ataroth] seit uralten und es baute sich der König von  
 "11. Israel Ataroth. Und ich kämpfte wider die Stadt und nahm sie ein, und ich erwürgte alles Volk das  
 "12. in der Stadt war, zum Wohlgefallen dem Kamos, dem Gott Moab's. Und ich nahm von dort . . . [die  
 "13. Opfergeräthe Jehova's und weihete sie] vor dem Angesicht des Kamos in Kirjathaim. Und ich liess darinnen wohnen die Männer von Shirân und die Männer von Zereth Scha-  
 "14. charath. Und es sprach zu mir Kamos: 'Gehe hin! nimm ein Nebo wider Israel!' Und ich ging  
 "15. hin während der Nacht und kämpfte wider sie vom Aufgang der Morgenröthe bis zum Mittag, und ich nahm ein dieselbige  
 "16. Stadt und ich erwürgte alle darinnen, sieben Stammfürsten . . .  
 "17. denn dem Astar Kamos (gehörte) der Bannfluch . . . Und ich nahm von dort  
 "18. alle Opfergeräthe Jehova's und weihte dieselben vor dem Angesicht des Kamos. Und es baute der König von Israel  
 "19. Jahaz und sass darinnen, indem er wider mich kämpfte, und es vertrieb ihn Kamos vor meinem Angesicht. Und  
 "20. ich nahm aus Moab zweihundert Mann, die volle Zahl. Und ich belagerte Jahaz und nahm es ein.  
 "21. es hinzufügend zu Dibon. Ich baute Korcha, die Mauer nach dem Walde zu und die Mauer  
 "22. [nach dem Thale zu], und ich baute seine Thore, und ich baute seine Thürme; und ich  
 "23. baute das Königshaus; und ich machte Behältnisse für die Bergwasser inmitten  
 "24. der Stadt. Und Cisternen waren nicht inmitten der Stadt, in Korcha; und ich sprach zu allem Volk: 'Machet [euch]  
 "25. ein jeder eine Cisterne in seinem Hause!' Und ich verhängte das Verbot für Korcha gegen [die Genossenschaft mit dem Volk]  
 "26. Israels. Ich baute Aröer und ich machte die Strasse am Arnon.  
 "27. Ich baute Beth-Bamoth, denn es war zerstört. Ich baute Bezer, denn es [bezwangen  
 "28. dasselbe] Männer von Dibon, ihrer fünfzig, denn ganz Dibon war unterthänig; und ich füllte  
 "29. [mit Bewohnern] Bikrân, welches ich hinzufügte zu dem Lande. Und ich baute  
 "30. . . . und den Tempel von Diblat-haïm und den Tempel von Baal Meon, und brachte dorthin den K[amos].  
 "31. . . . das Land. Und Horonaim . . . es wohnte darin  
 "32. . . . Es sprach zu mir Kamos: 'Ziehe hinab! kämpfe wider Horonaim und [nimm es ein].  
 "33. . . . Kamos in meinen Tagen . . .  
 "34. . . .

# PROFESSOR KAEMPF.

"1. Ich, Mesa, Sohn des Kamos—Astor, Königs von Moab, aus  
 "2. Dibon. Mein Vater war König über Moab dreissig Jahre, und ich wurde  
 "3. König nach meinem Vater. Und ich errichtete diese Anhöhe (Altar) dem Kamos auf dem Kahlberg, an der Stätte der Rettung,  
 "4. denn er rettete mich von allen Königen (oder: aus allen zufällen), und liess mich meine Lust schauen an allen meinen Feinden. Aufstand [der Sohn Isaïs]  
 "5. der König von Israel, und unterdrückte Moab viele Tage, denn Kamos zürnte seinem  
 "6. Lande.—Es trat an seine Stelle sein Sohn, da sprach auch dieser: "Ich will Moab unterdrücken in den Tagen meiner Herrschaft!"  
 "7. Aber ich sah meine Lust an ihm und seinem Hause, und auch Israel geht zu Grunde auf immerdar.—Es nahm Omri Besitz von der Stadt  
 "8. Mehedebe und sass darin bis an seinen Sterbetag, und nach ihm sein Sohn, zusammen vierzig Jahre. Doch  
 "9. Kamos brachte sie zurück in meinen Tagen. Ich baute Baal Meon und führte darin einen Thurm auf; ich baute auch  
 "10. Kirjathaim. Und die Männer von (aus dem Stamme) Gad wohnten in diesem Lande seit der Vorzeit Da baute sich der König  
 "11. von Israel Kir. Ich aber kämpfte gegen Kir und eroberte es. Da erwürgte ich alle personen in  
 "12. Kir, zum Wohlgefallen dem Kamos und Moab. Ich kehrte von dort zurück, nachdem ich die Beute gesammelt—  
 "13. diese legte ich vor Kamos nieder in Kiriath. Dorthin versetzte ich Männer aus Schiran und Männer aus Zereth  
 "14. Schacharath. Darauf sprach Kamos zu mir: Gehe, greife Nebo an gegen Israel!" Ich ging  
 "15. so fort in der Nacht und kämpfte wider sie, vom Hervorbrechen des Frühroths bis zum Mittag, und ich eroberte sie  
 "16. und erwürgte alles darin—von Mann bis Frau, von Kind bis Säugling—,  
 "17. denn dem Astor-Kamos hatte ich alles gebannt. Auch nahm ich von dort.  
 "18. die Geräthe Jah . . . 's und legte sie hin vor Kamos. Der König von Israel aber baute  
 "19. Jahaz und sass darin, während er gegen mich kämpfte; doch vertrieb ihn Kamos vor mir.  
 "20. Ich nämlich nahm von Moab zweihundert Mann, lauter Hauptleute, und führte sie nach Jahaz, um zu zerbrechen  
 "21. das Joch Dibon's (das auf D. lastete). Ich baute auch Korcheh, die Mauern an der Waldseite und die Mauern  
 "22. der Festungswerke; ich baute auch ihre Thore und ich baute ihre Thürme. Ich  
 "23. baute ferner Bet-Melech (Königspalast oder Moloch-Tempel), und ich baute die Schleusen der Wasserströmung innerhalb  
 "24. der Stadt. Denn nicht war eine Cisterne innerhalb der Stadt in Korcheh; und so befahl ich allem Volke: "Machet euch  
 "25. Jeder eine Cisterne in seinem Hause!"—Ich grub auch den Graben um Korcheh, nachdem ich  
 "26. Israel vertrieben hatte. Ich baute Aröer und legte an die Strasse am Arnon.  
 "27. Ich baute Bet-Bamath, welches zerstört war; ich baute Bezer, denn mich unterstützten  
 "28. bewaffnete Männer aus Dibön, da ganz Dibön (der ganze zur Stadt D. gehörige Kreis) mir unterthänig war. Und ich vervollständigte  
 "29. die Befestigungen in den Städten, die ich hinzufügte zum Lande. Ich baute auch Bet-  
 "30. Gamul und Beth Diblataim und Beth-Baal-Meon und führte dorthin jene zweihundert mann (die in Jahaz lagen).  
 "31. um in Besitz zu nehmen (oder: um zu bewachen) das Land. Es wohnten nämlich darin (in B. M.) die Chawranin (Haurainer) in Sicherheit und  
 "32. bauten . . . Da sprach zu mir Kamos: "Ziehe hinab und bekriege die Chawranin und greife B. B. Meon an." Und so zog ich hinab, kämpfte und griff sie an—  
 "33. —und Kamos brachte sie zurück in meinen Tagen. Und desswegen habe ich diese  
 "34. Anhöhe errichtet dem Kamos auf dem Kahlberg. —Und nun, Volk des Kamos—sei stark und tapfer!"

# PROFESSOR HITZIG.

"1. Ich Mesha, Sohn des Chamos —, Mich hat Chamos zum König Moabs aufge-  
 "2. stellt. Mein Vater war König über Moab dreissig Jahre und ich ward  
 "3. König nach meinem Vater. Und ich errichtete diese Opferhöhe dem Chamos auf dem Freiplatze,  
 "4. für alles Heil, dass er mich rettete von allen Königen und meine Lust mich sehn liess an all meinen Hassern. Omri trat  
 "5. auf, der König Israels, und bedrückte Moab viele Tage lang. Sonach ergrimmte Chamos; da sein  
 "6. Ende kam, und sein Sohn ihm nachfolgte, auch er sagte: ich will Moab bedrücken, sagte er in meinen Tagen: zu der zeit  
 "7. da hab' ich geschaut auf ihn und sein Haus; und Israel geht zu Grunde, zu Grunde ewiglich. Und Omri eignete sich den Hügel  
 "8. Medaba's zu und siedelte in ihr, er und nach ihm sein Sohn Ahab vierzig Jahre. Ihn  
 "9. bewängte Chamos in meinen Tagen; und so baute ich Baal-Mëon und errichtete in ihr einen Höhen-tempel und ich baute auch  
 "10. Kirjathän. Und die Männer von Gad siedelten im Flachlande von Alters her; und es baute sich der König  
 "11. Israel's Kir-heresh. Ich aber stritt wider Kir, nahm sie ein und mordete die ganze  
 "12. Volksmenge Kirs: ein Schauspiel für Chamos und für Moab. Und ich führte von dort [ihren Besitz-stand] hinweg, Kleinvieh und  
 "13. Rinder, sie zu opfern) vor Chamos in Kerijot; und ich siedelte in ihr die Leute von Saron an und die Leute [vom Berge]  
 "14. der Runsen. Und Chamos sprach zu mir: Geh; nimm den Israeliten Nebo weg; Und ich rückte vor sie,  
 "15. in der Nacht marschierend, und ich stritt wider sie vom Aufsteigen des Morgenrothes bis zum Mittag und ich überwältigte  
 "16. ihre Volksmenge; und ich mordete sie alle, sieben Tausend. Aber von ihrer Beute zogen wir unsere Hand zurück,  
 "17. und thaten dieselbe zu Haufen: denn dem Schatze des Chamos wurde die Beute geweiht; und ich nahm von dort  
 "18. die Geräthe Jahve's und heiligte sie, und sie befanden sich vor Chamos. Und der König von Israel baute  
 "19. Jahaz und siedelte darin, da er wider mich stritt. Aber Chamos vertrieb ihn vor mir;  
 "20. und ich holte von Moab zweihundert Mann herbei, alle seine Unbegiterten, und pflanzte sie in Jahaz an, und ich nahm sie  
 "21. (mir) zur Warte gegen Dibon. Ich bebaute den Freiplatz mit einer Burg der Wälder und einer Burg  
 "22. der Forste; und ich baute seine Thore und ich baute seine Thürme; und  
 "23. ich baute ein Königshaus; und ich machte Gefängnisse der Straffälligen in mitten von  
 "24. Kir. Eine Grube aber gab es nicht inmitten von Kir auf dem Freiplatze, und so sagte ich zu dem ganzen Volke: machet euch  
 "25. jeder eine Grube in seinem Hause. Und ich habe die Rodungen gerodet zu einem Freiplatze im Lande  
 "26. Israels: ich habe Aroer gebaut, und ich habe die Strassen am Arnon gemacht:  
 "27. und ich habe den Höhentempel gebaut, denn er war geschleift. Ich habe Bezer gebaut; denn es wehrten mich  
 "28. die Männer Dibons gewappnet ab, denn ganz Dibon war widerspenstig; und ich siedele gegenüber von Bezer.  
 "29. Zu schauen auf das Horn, welches ich zu dem Lande hinzugefügt habe. Ich habe auch gebaut [Bamot-  
 "30. Baal] und Beth Diblatän und Beth Baal-Maon; und ich verpflanzte dorthin die Bettler Moabs,  
 "31. alle Dürftigen des Landes. Und Horonän—in ihr siedelten [am Abhang Männer Edoms  
 "32. von Alters her]; und Chamos sprach zu mir: zieh hinab, streite wider Horonän. Und ich zog hinab und nahm sie ein. Und die  
 "33. Männer Dibons.—es zürnte wider sie Chamos in meinen Tagen, auch wegen Tribut [welchen sie erpressten; —und er—  
 "34. sprach zu mir: (Geh;) nimm Dibon ein; und ich stritt wider sie, indem ich Macht übte,] und [nahm sie ein.]

# M. NEUBAUER.

"1. I, Mesha, son of Chemosh . . . King of Moab [son]  
 "2. of Yabhni. . . . My father reigned over Moab (30 years), and I reigned  
 "3. after him; I made this altar for Chemosh at Karhah on account  
 "4. of the assistance he gave me in all battles, and because he made me successful against my enemies the men  
 "5. of the King of Israel, who oppressed Moab a long time, for Chemosh was angry against  
 "6. his land. His son succeeded him, and he also said, I will oppress Moab. In my days he (Chemosh) said [I will go]  
 "7. and appear (be favourable) to Moab and his temple; then Israel wasted continually. Omri took [the plain of]  
 "8. Madheba and dwelt in it . . built 40 . . [and dwelt]  
 "9. Chemosh there in my days. I built Baal-Meon and made (sacrifices) there, . . and I [built]  
 "10. Kiryathan. The men of Gad [dwelt] in [this] land from early times, and there built the King  
 "11. of Israel [Yaazer]; I besieged the city, took it, and killed all [who dwelt]  
 "12. in the city, to the gratification of Chemosh and Moab; I made captive there . . .  
 "13. [and brought] to Chemosh at Keriyoth. I remained here with the chiefs and [the soldiers until]  
 "14. the next day. Then Chemosh bade me go and take Nebo from Israel. [I arose and]  
 "15. went in the night and fought against it from the break of day till noon; I  
 "16. took it, killed all, seven thousand . . . [to please Astor],  
 "17. . . . for Chemosh devoted to Astor . . . I took from there all  
 "18. the vessels of Jehovah and [offered] them to Chemosh. And the King of Israel built  
 "19. Yahaz, and dwelt there, when I made war upon him. Chemosh drove him out from thence; I  
 "20. took from Moab two hundred men, all chiefs, transferred them to Yahaz, and began  
 "21. to make war against Dibon. I built Karhah, Hamath-ha-Yearim and Hamath  
 "22. H . . . ; I constructed their gates and their towers; I  
 "23. built the palace, and I made aqueducts (?) in the interior  
 "24. of the town. There were no cisterns in the interior of the town of Karhah, and I said to all the people, Make  
 "25. every one a cistern in his house. And I made a ditch round Karhah with [the men]  
 "26. of Israel. I built (Aro)er and I made a passage over the Arnon.  
 "27. I built Beth-Bamoth, which had been overthrown, and Bezer, which had been destroyed.  
 "28. I fortified Dibon to hold it in subjection, and I constructed  
 "29. fortresses in the towns which I added to [my] land. I built  
 "30. . . . Beth Diblatan, Beth Baal Meon, and transported thither [Moabites]  
 "31. [in order to take possession of] the land. At Horonaim dwelt [the children of Reuben]. . . .  
 "32. Chemosh told me, Go, fight against Horonaim. [I fought against it, took it]  
 "33. [and there dwelt] Chemosh in my days. . . .  
 "34. . . ."

## MR. HAYES.

"1. I am Mesha, son of Chemosh-gad, King of Moab, the Di-

"2. bonite. My father reigned over Moab thirty years, and I reign-

"3. ed after my father. And I made this high place to Chemosh in Karhah [and this house of Sal-

"4. vation because he has saved me from all the attacks and because he has caused me to look on all my enemies. Omr-

"5. i was King of Israel, and he afflicted Moab many days, because Chemosh was angry with his land.

"6. And his son succeeded him, and he also said, 'I will afflict Moab.' In my days he spake thus.

"7. And I looked on him and on his house, and Israel kept continually perishing. And Omri kept possession of the land (?) of

"8. Medeba. And there dwelt in it [Omri and his son and his grand] son forty years. [But]

"9. Chemosh [restored] it in many days. And I built Baal-Meon and I made in it —. And I [besieged] (?)

"10. Kirjathaim. And the men of Gad had dwelt of old in the land [of Kirjathaim]. And the King of Israel built

"11. for [him [Kirjathaim]. And I fought against the city and took it. And I slew all the [men of]

"12. the city, a spectacle to Chemosh and to Moab. And I brought back from thence the [altar of Jehovah, and put

"13. it before Chemosh in Kerioth. And I caused to dwell therein the men of Shiran; and the men of—

"14. Sharath. And Chemosh said to me, 'Go and take Nebo from Israel.' [And I—]

"15. went in the night and I fought against it from the overspreading of the dawn till noon. And I [took it and I]

"16. [utterly destroyed] it, and I slew all of it seven thousand—

"17. — for to Ashtor Chemosh had [I] devoted [them] and I took from thence the

"18. vessels of Jehovah, and I presented them before Chemosh. And the King of Israel [built]

"19. Jahaz and dwelt in it while he was fighting against me. And Chemosh drove him from [before me; and]

"20. I took from Moab 200 men, all old; and I attacked (?) Jahaz and took it,

"21. joining it to Dibon. I built Karhah, the wall of the forests and the wall of

"22. the hill [Ophel]. And I built its gates and I built its towers and

"23. I made a royal palace, and I made reservoirs for a collection of the waters in the midst

"24. of the city. And there was no cistern in the midst of the city in Karhah; and I said to all the people, 'Make

"25. for you each man a cistern in the house.' And I dug ditches (?) for Karhah [in the road

"26. to] Israel. I built [A]roer, and I made the highway to Arnon.

"27. I built Beth-Bamoth, for it was ruined, and I built Bozrah, for it was deserted (?)

"28. And I set in Dibon garrisons (?) for all Dibon was submissive. And I filled (?)

"29. — in the cities which I added to the land. And I built

"30. — and the temple of Diblathaim, and the temple of Baal-Meon, and I raised up there—

"31. — the land. And there dwelt in Horonaim—

"32. Chemosh said to me, 'Go fight against Horonaim.' And I—

"33. —Chemosh in my days . . . .

"34. \* \* \* \* \*

## PROFESSOR WRIGHT.

"1. I Mesha, son of Kemosh-gad, King of Moab, the Di-

"2. bonite—my father reigned over Moab thirty years, and I reign-

"3. ed after my father. And I made this high place for Kemosh in Korchoh, a high-place of de-

"4. liverance, because he delivered me from all enemies and let me look [with pleasure] upon [the destruction of] all my haters. There arose Om-

"5. ri, King of Israel, and he oppressed Moab many days, because Kemosh was angry with his

"6. land. And his son [i.e. Ahab] succeeded him, and he too said 'I will oppress Moab. In my days he said this,

"7. but I looked upon [the ruin of] him and his house, and Israel perished for ever. And Omri had taken possession of the plain

"8. of Medeba, and dwelt in it; and they oppressed Moab, he and his son, forty years; but looked

"9. upon him [i.e. Moab] Kemosh in my days. And I built [i.e. restored or fortified] Baal-Meon, and constructed in it the moat (?); and I built

"10. Kiryathaim. And the men of Gad were dwelling in the land of Ataroth from of old, and the King of Is-

"11. rael had built for himself the city; and I fought against the city, and took it, and slew all the inhabitants of

"12. the city [as] a [pleasing] sight to Kemosh and Moab; and I carried off thence the . . . of Yahveh and drag-

"13. ged it [for them] before Kemosh at Kerioth. And I made dwell in it [viz. Ataroth] the people of Shiran and the people of . . . .

"14. M—ch—rath (?). And Kemosh said to me, 'Go, take Nebo from Israel.' And I

"15. went by night, and fought against it from the dawning of the morning until midday, and I

"16. took it, and slew the whole [population] of it, seven thousand . . . . .

"17. . . . . for to Ashtor-Kemosh I had devoted it; and I took away thence the

"18. vessels of Yahveh, and dragged them before Kemosh. And the King of Israel [i.e. Ahaziah] built

"19. Yahaz, and abode in it whilst he was fighting against me; but Kemosh drove him out before me [literally before my face];

"20. and I took of Moab two hundred men, all his headmen (?), and I led them up (?) to Yahaz, and took it,

"21. in addition to Dibon. I built Korchoh, the wall of the woods and the wall of

"22. the mound; and I built its gates, and I built its towers; and

"23. I built the palace; and I made the reservoirs for rain water (?) in the midst of

"24. the city. And there was not a cistern in the midst of the city, in Korchoh; and I said to the whole people 'make for

"25. yourselves each a cistern in his house.' And I cut the moat for Korchoh with the [labour of] the captives

"26. of Israel. I built Aroer; and I made the road over the Arnon

"27. I [re]built Beth-Bamoth, for it had been pulled down. I built Bezer, for . . . . .

"28. . . . . men of Dibon, fifty [in number], for all Dibon was submission [submissive to me]. And I . . . .

"29. . . . . in the cities (?), which I added to the land. And I built

"30. . . . . and Beth-Diblathaim, and Beth-Baal-Meon; and I took up (?) thither the . . . .

"31. . . . . the land. And Horonaim, there dwelt in it. B . . . . .

"32. . . . . And Kemosh said to me, 'Go down, fight against Horonaim.' And I . . . . .

"33. . . . . Kemosh in my days. And . . . .

"34. . . . . year (?) . . . . ."

## DR. GINSBURG.

"1. I Mesha am son of Chemoshgad King of Moab, the

"2. Dibonite. My father reigned over Moab thirty years, and I reign-

"3. ed after my father. And I erected this Stone to Chemosh at Korcha [a Stone of]

"4. [sa]lvation, for he saved me from all despoilers and let me see my desire upon all my enemies.

"5. Now Om[r]i, King of Israel, he oppressed Moab many days, for Chemosh was angry with his

"6. [la]nd. His son succeeded him, and he also said, I will oppress Moab. In my days he said, [Let us go]

"7. and I will see my desire on him and his house, and Israel said, I shall destroy it for ever. Now Omri took the land

"8. Medeba and [the enemy] occupied it [in his days and in] the days of his son, forty years. And Chemosh [had mercy]

"9. on it in my days; and I built Baal Meon, and made therein the ditch and I [built]

"10. Kirjathaim. For the men of Gad dwelled in the land [Atar]oth from of old, and the K[ing of I]srael fortified

"11. A[tar]oth, and I assaulted the wall and captured it, and killed all the wa[rriors of]

"12. the wall, for the well-pleasing of Chemosh and Moab; and I removed from it all the spoil, and [of-

"13. fered] it before Chemosh in Kirjath; and I placed therein the men of Siran and the me[n of]

"14. Mochrath. And Chemosh said to me, Go take Nebo against Israel. [And I]

"15. went in the night, and I fought against it from the break of dawn till noon, and I took

"16. it, and slew in all seven thousand [men, but I did not kill] the wom-

"17. en [and ma]idens, for [I] devoted [them] to Ashtar-Chemosh; and I took from it

"18. [the ves]sels of Jehovah and offered them before Chemosh. And the King of Israel fortifi[ed]

"19. Jahaz, and occupied it, when he made war against me; and Chemosh drove him out before [me and]

"20. I took from Moab two hundred men, all its poor, and placed them in Jahaz, and took it,

"21. to annex it to Dibon. I built Korcha, the wall of the forest, and the wall

"22. of the city, and I built the gates thereof, and I built the towers thereof, and I

"23. built the palace, and I made the prisons for the crim[inal]s with[in the]

"24. wall. And there was no cistern in the wall in Korcha, and I said to all the people, Make for yourselves

"25. every man a cistern in his house. And I dug the ditch for Korcha with the [chosen] men of

"26. [I]srael. I built Aroer and I made the road across the Arnon,

"27. I built Beth-Bamoth, for it was destroyed; I built Bezer, for it was cu[t down]

"28. by the armed m[en] of Dibon, for all Dibon was now loyal; and I reign[ed]

"29. from Bikran, which I added to my land, and I bui[lt]

"30. [Beth-Gamul], and Beth-Diblathaim, and Beth-Baal-Meon, and I placed there the p[oor]

"31. [people of] the land. And as to Horonaim [the men of Edom] dwelt therein [on the descent from of old]

"32. And Chemosh said to me, Go down, make war against Horonaim, and ta[k]e it. And I assaulted it,

"33. [And I took it for] Chemosh [restored it] in my days. Wherefore I ma[de]

"34. year . . . and I . . . .

## VOCABULARY.

NOTE:—The Asterisk indicates that the word or form in question does not occur in the Hebrew Scriptures. p. n. denotes proper names. All words in which even one letter is missing have been excluded from the Vocabulary.

## א

- א, at the beginning of a word, prefixed as a prosthetic aleph. See אָשֶׁח, line 9.  
 אב, *father*, אָבִי, *my father*, lines 2, 3; frequently in the Hebrew Scriptures.  
 אכר, *to wander about, to be lost*; Hiph. אֶכֶר, *I shall destroy*, line 7. In the Hebrew Scriptures; Jer. xli. 8, where, however, it has paragogic *He*.  
 אכר, *annihilation, destruction*, line 7; Comp. Numb. xxiv. 20, 24.  
 אחז, *to seize, to take*. Imperative, אָחֹז, *take*, line 14; frequently in Hebrew; \* וְאָחַזְתָּהּ, *and I took her*, lines 11, 20. This *Kal*, future, first person singular, with suffix, third person feminine; and *Vav* conversive, does not occur in the Hebrew Scriptures.  
 אחרי, preposition *after*, line 3, common in Hebrew.  
 אלף, *thousand*. Plural, אֲלָפִים, line 16; frequently in Hebrew.  
 אָמַר, *to say*; *Kal*, Preterite אָמַר, *he said*, line 6; frequently in Hebrew. וְיָאמַר, *and he said*, third person singular, imperfect with *Vav* conversive, lines 6, 14; frequently in Hebrew. וְיָאמַר, *and I said*, first person singular, imperfect with *Vav*, conversive, line 24; frequently in Hebrew.  
 אַן, negative, *not*, line 24; Hebrew אֵין, always plene.  
 אנך, personal pronoun *I*, lines 1, 21, 26, 27, 29. וְאֵנִי, *and I*, lines 2, 22 (twice), 22-23, 23, 25, 26, 28, 29; frequently in Hebrew, where, however, it has the termination *z*.  
 אנף, *to be angry*. \* וְאֵנִי, line 5, an uncertain form, which does not occur in the Hebrew Scriptures, see Commentary, on line 8.  
 ארבע, the cardinal number *four*, plural אַרְבָּעִים *forty*, line 8; frequently in Hebrew.  
 ארנן, *the river Arnon*. בְּאֶרְנֵן, *over the Arnon*, line 26; Comp. Numb. xxi. 13, 26, &c.  
 ארץ, *land, territory*, lines 7-8. בְּאֶרֶץ, *in the land*, line 10. הָאֶרֶץ, *the land*, lines 29, 31; frequently in Hebrew.  
 אש, collective *men*, lines 13, 20, 25. וְאֵשׁ, *and the men*, line 10. הָאֵשׁ, *the men*, line 23; Comp. Job xxxviii. 26; Hos. xi. 4; in Hebrew it is always אֵשׁ plene.  
 אֵשֶׁת, \* *a ditch*, line 9; from שָׁטַח, *to sink deep*. In Hebrew this form does not occur, though we have שְׁקָה, *a cleft, a depth, a pit*; Jer. ii. 6, xviii. 21.  
 אֲשֶׁר, relative pronoun, *who, which*, line 29; frequently in Hebrew.  
 אַח, sign of the accusative, lines 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11 (twice), 12, 13, 14, 29, 30. וְאַח, line 13, common in Hebrew.

## ב

- ב, inseparable preposition, *in*, lines 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 20, 24, 25, 26, common in Hebrew.  
 בִּי, *in me*, line 19; frequently in Hebrew.  
 בִּה, *in him*, lines 7, 9.  
 בָּה, *in her*, lines 8, 9 (twice), 13, 15, 19, 31.  
 בית, *house*, construct בֵּית, line 23; in Hebrew it is בֵּית plene. בֵּיתוֹ, *in his house*, plene, line 25. וּבֵיתוֹ, *and in his house*, defective, line 7.  
 בִּשָּׁת, *altar, pillar*, הַבִּישָּׁת, *the pillar*, line 3; in Hebrew it is בִּישָּׁת.

בֶּן, *son*, line 1. בְּנוֹ, *his son*, lines 6, 8.

- בָּנִי, *to build, to rebuild, to repair*. בָּנִיתִי, *I built, rebuilt*, lines 21, 22 (twice), 23, 26, 27 (twice). וּבָנִי, *and he rebuilt*, line 10, frequently in the Bible. \* וְבָנִי, *and I built*, line 9. This imperfect first person, with *Vav* conversive, does not occur in the Hebrew Scriptures.  
 בעל קען, name of place, *Baal-Meon*, line 9; Comp. Numb. xxxii. 38; 1 Chron. v. 8.  
 בער, \* name of place, *Bezer*, line 27. In Hebrew it is בְּעֵרָה; Comp. Jer. xlviii. 24.  
 בִּקְרָן, \* p. n., *Bikran*, line 29; not in the Hebrew Scriptures.  
 בֵּר, *cistern*, line 22. וּבֵר, *and cistern*. In Hebrew, בֵּוֹר, plene.  
 בֵּת בָּמֹת \* p. n., *Beth-Bamoth*, line 27; not in the Hebrew Scriptures.  
 בֵּת בַּעַל קַעֵן, p. n., *Beth-Baal-Meon*, line 30; Comp. Josh. xiii. 17.  
 בֵּת דִּבְלַתַּיִם, p. n., *Beth-Diblathaim*, line 30; Comp. Jer. xlviii. 22.

## ג

- גִּד, p. n., *Gad*, line 10, frequently in Hebrew.  
 גם, conjunctive, *also*, line 6, the ordinary Hebrew expression.  
 גָּרַשׁ, *to drive away, to expel*. \* וַיִּגְרַשֵּׁהוּ, *and he expelled him*, line 19. This third person singular imperfect *Kal*, with *Vav* conversive and suffix third person masculine, does not occur in the Hebrew Bible.

## ד

- דִּבּוֹן, p. n., *Dibon*, lines 21, 28 (twice); Comp. Numb. xxxii. 34; xxxiii. 45, &c. \* הַדִּבּוֹנִי, *the Dibonite*, line 1-2; not in the Hebrew Scriptures.

## ה

- ה, the article, lines 1, 3, 4, 9, 12, 15, 21, 22, 23, 24 (twice), 25, 26, 29, 31.  
 הָא, pronoun, *he*, line 6; including in itself the verb *to be*, thus making a complete proposition with the predicate, line 27; Comp. Gen. xxv. 21. In Hebrew it is always plene.  
 הָרַג, *to kill*. \* וַיַּהַרְגֵנִי, *and I killed*, lines 11, 16. Though this future does not occur in the Hebrew Bible with *Vav* conversive, yet without the *Vav* it is to be found twice, Comp. Amos ii. 3; ix. 9.  
 הָרַס, *to tear to pieces, to destroy*. \* הָרַסוּהוּ, *destroyed*, line 27. This participle passive does not occur in the Hebrew Scriptures.

## ו

- ו, conjunctive copulative, *and*, lines 2, 4, 7 (twice), 10, 12, 13, 18, 22 (twice), 23, 24 (twice), 25, 26, 28, 29, 30 (twice), 31. *Vav conversive*, prefixed to the future, and imparting to it when preceded by a preterite the sense of the imperfect, lines 3, 5, 6 (twice), 7 (twice), 8, 9 (twice), 10, 11 (thrice), 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19 (twice), 20 (twice), 30.

## ז

- זֹאת, demonstrative pronoun, feminine, *this*, line 3; frequently in Hebrew.

חורון, p. n., *Horonaim*, and *the Horonaim*, line 31.  
 חורון, *against Horonaim*, line 32; Comp. Isa. xv. 5;  
 Jer. xlviii. 3, 5, 34.

הִתְּ, *to change, to come after, to succeed*. \*הִתְּלַפּוּ, *and he succeeded him*, line 6. This form of the word does not occur in the Hebrew Scriptures, nor is הִתְּ used in Hebrew to denote *succeeded*, but it is so in Arabic.

הִתְּ, *to be brave*. Participle, הִתְּשָׁן, *armed*, line 28; four times in Hebrew.

חֹמֶת, *a wall*, line 21; in Hebrew, חוֹמָה.

קָדַשׁ, *to consecrate*, line 17.

יְהוָה, *Jehovah*, line 18; frequently in Hebrew.

יָהִז, p. n., *Jahaz*, line 19. יָהִזְךָ, *against Jahaz*, line 20; twice in the Hebrew Scriptures. Comp. Isa. xv. 4; Jerem. xlviii. 34.

לֵךְ, *to go*. Imperative, לֵךְ, *go*, line 14; frequently in Hebrew.  
 יוֹם, *day*. Plural, יָמִים, *days*, line 5. יָמַי, *in my days*, lines 6, 9, 33; frequently in Hebrew.

הָבֵה, *to bring together, to add*. \*הָבֵהְתִּי, *I added*, line 29; Comp. Levit. xxvi. 18, 21. \*הָבֵהְתִּי, *to add*, line 21. This infinitive *Kal* does not occur in the Hebrew Scriptures.

יָד, *a forest*. Plural, יָדָיו, *the forests*, line 21, once in the Hebrew Scriptures; Comp. Ezek. 33; xxxix. 10.

יָד, *to go*. Imperative, יָד, *go*, line 32; frequently in Hebrew.

יָרַשׁ, *to take possession of, to conquer*. \*יָרַשׁ, *and he took*, line 7. This imperfect *Kal*, with *Vav* conversive, does not occur in Hebrew.

יָשַׁב, *to dwell, to occupy*, line 31. יָשַׁב, participle, line 10; frequently in Hebrew. \*יָשַׁבְתִּי, *and he occupied*, lines 8, 19; frequently in Hebrew. \*יָשַׁבְתִּי, *and I placed*, line 13. This imperfect Hiphil, with *Vav* conversive, does not occur in the Hebrew Scriptures.

יָשַׁע, *to be free, Hiphil, to deliver*. \*יָשַׁעַנִּי, *he saved me*, line 4. The Hiphil with suffix does not occur in Hebrew.

יִשְׂרָאֵל, *Israel*, lines 5, 11, 14, 18, 26. \*יִשְׂרָאֵל, *and Israel*, line 7.

## כ

כִּי, conjunction, *that, because*, lines 4, 5, 17, 27 (twice), 28; and *and because*, line 4; frequently in Hebrew.

כָּל, *all*, lines 11, 20, 28. כָּל, *in all*, line 4. כָּל, *from all*, line 4. כָּל, *to all*, line 24. כָּלָה, *all its*, line 16; all these forms occur frequently in Hebrew.

כְּלִיא, *a prison*. Plural, כְּלִיִּם. Construct, \*כְּלִיא, line 23; not in the Hebrew Scriptures.

כְּמוֹשׁ, *Chemosh*, lines 5, 9, 13, 14, 18, 19, 32, 33. \*כְּמוֹשׁ, *to Chemosh*, lines 3, 12; frequently in Hebrew.

כְּמוֹשָׁד, \**Chemoshgad*, line 1; not in Hebrew.

כָּדָה, *to dig*. כָּדַתִּי, *I dug*, line 25; Comp. Gen. i. 5.

## ל

ל, preposition prefixed, lines 3, 12 (twice), 13, 17, 18, 24, 25; frequently in Hebrew.

לָהּ, *to him*, line 10; frequently in Hebrew.

לִי, *to me*, lines 14, 32; frequently in Hebrew.

לָכֶם, *to you*, line 24—25; frequently in Hebrew.

לָחֵם, *to fight*. Hiphil \*לָחֵם, infinitive, line 19; not in Hebrew. \*לָחֵם, imperative, line 32; not in Hebrew. \*לָחֵם, imperfect with *Vav* conversive, lines 11, 15; not in Hebrew.

לַיְלָה, *night*. בַּלַּיְלָה, *in the night*, line 15. In Hebrew, where this expression occurs very frequently, it is always with *Yod* plene between the two *Lameds*.

לָקַח, *to take*. וָלָקַחְתִּי, *and I took*, lines 17, 20; frequently in Hebrew.

## מ

מ, preposition prefixed, lines 4, 12, 15, 17, 20; frequently in Hebrew.

מֹאָב, p. n., *Moab*, lines 1, 2, 5, 6. וּלְמֹאָב, *and to Moab*, line 12. מִמֹּאָב, *from Moab*, line 20; frequently in Hebrew.

מֵאָה, *a hundred*, dual קַמָּאָה, *two hundred*, line 20; frequently in Hebrew.

מִגְדָּל, *a tower*. \*מִגְדָּלֶיהָ, *her towers*, line 22; not in Hebrew, with suffix third person feminine.

מֵדֵבָה, p. n., *Medeba*, line 8; in the Hebrew Scriptures, מֵדְבָה; Numb. xxi. 30; Isa. xv. 2.

מִדְּוָה, meaning uncertain; see Commentary on line 14.

מִקְדָּחָה, *a ditch*. \*מִקְדָּחָהּ, *the ditch*, line 25; not in Hebrew Scriptures.

מָלַךְ, *to reign*, line 2; frequently in Hebrew. \*מָלַכְתִּי, *I reigned*, lines 2-3; not in Hebrew.

מֶלֶךְ, *king*, lines 1, 5, 23. וּמֶלֶךְ, *and the king*, line 18; frequently in Hebrew.

דֶּרֶךְ, *road*. \*דֶּרֶךְ הַדֶּסֶל, *the road*, line 26; in the Hebrew Scriptures it is דֶּסֶלָה, Comp. 2 Sam. xx. 12, 13; Isa. lxii. 10.

מִשְׁמָעַת, \**obedience*, concrete, *subject*, line 28; not in Hebrew, except with suffix.

מֶשֶׁה, p. n., *Mesha*, line 1; Comp. 2 Kings iii. 4. 1 Chron. ii. 42, where however it is plene.

## נ

נֶבֶה, p. n., *Nebo*, line 14; Comp. Numb. xxxii. 3, 38; xxxiii. 47; 1 Chron. v. 8.

נָחַם, *to carry, to lead, to place*. \*נָחַמְתִּי, *and I placed*, line 30; the form occurs frequently in Hebrew, but not in this sense. \*נָחַמְתִּי, line 20; not in the Bible.

## ס

סָבַב, *to cast down, to place, to offer*. \*סָבַבְתִּי, *and I offered*, line 18; not in Hebrew, either in this sense or in this form.

## ע

עַד, preposition *unto, till*, line 15; frequently in Hebrew.

עֲטָרוֹת, p. n., *Ataroth*, line 11; Comp. Numb. xxxii. 3, 34.

עַל, preposition *upon, over, against*, lines 2, 14, 21, 29; frequently in Hebrew.

עוֹלָם, *everlasting, time of old*, line 7. מִן עוֹלָם, *from time of old*, line 10; frequently in Hebrew.

עַם, *people*. הָעַם, *the people*, line 24; frequently in Hebrew.

עֹמְרִי, p. n., *Omri*, line 7; Comp. 1 Kings xvi. 16.

עָנָה, *to afflict, to oppress*. \*עָנָהּ, *and he oppressed*, line 5. \*עָנָהּ, *I shall oppress*, line 6; not in the Hebrew Scriptures.

עֵלִי, *hill*. הָעֵלִי, *the hill*, line 22; Comp. 2 Kings v. 24.

עֲרֹעַר, p. n., *Aroer*, line 26; Comp. Deut. ii. 36; iii. 12; iv. 48, &c.

עָשָׂה, *to do, to make*. \*עָשִׂיתִי, *I made*, lines 23, 26. Imperative, עָשִׂי, *make ye*, line 24. \*עָשִׂיתִי, *and I made*, lines 3, 9. All these forms are in the Hebrew Bible.

עֲשֵׂתִי כְמוֹשׁ, \*p. n., *Ashter-Chemosh*, line 17; not in the Hebrew Bible.

## פ

פָּנִי, *front*. לְפָנַי, *before*, lines 13, 18; frequently in Hebrew.

## צ

צָהָר, *light*, dual. צָהָרִים, *noon*, line 15; Comp. Isa. xvi. 3; Jer. xx. 16; Ps. xci. 6.

## ק

- קיר, *wall*. הקיר, *the wall*, lines 12, 24. בקיר, *in the wall*, line 11; frequently in the Hebrew Bible.
- קרב, *the inner part*; preposition, בקרב, *in the midst of*, line 24; Comp. Gen. xlv. 6.
- קורחה, \* p. n., *Korcha*, line 21. \* בקורחה, *in Korcha*, lines 3, 24. \* לקורחה, *to Korcha*, line 25; not in the Hebrew Scripture.
- קיריאת, p. n., *Kirjath*. \* בקיריאת, *in Kirjath*, line 13; not in Hebrew in this contracted form.
- קיריאתן, p. n., *Kirjathaim*, line 10; Comp. Numb. xxxii. 37; Josh. xiii. 19.

## ר

- רָאָה, *to see*. וּרְאָה, *and I shall see*, line 7; frequently in Hebrew. \* הִרְאֵנִי, *he let me see*, line 4. This Preterite Hiphil, with the suffix first person, does not occur in Hebrew.
- רב, *many*. Plural, רַבִּין, line 5; frequently in Hebrew.
- רַח, \* *well pleasing*, line 12; not in Hebrew.
- רָכַץ, *break*. \* מִרְכָּץ, *from the break of*, line 15; not in the Hebrew Bible.
- רָשָׁה, *poor*. \* רִשָּׁה, *its poor*, line 20. Though this participle is frequently used in the Hebrew Scriptures, yet it never occurs with any pronominal suffix.

## ש

- שָׁקַח, *to take away, to remove*. \* וַאֲשַׁכּ, *and I removed*, line 12; not in Hebrew.
- שִׁבְעָה, cardinal number, *seven*, line 16.
- שַׁחֲרָח, *morning*. \* הַשַּׁחֲרָח, *the dawn*, line 15. This form does not occur in the Hebrew Scriptures.
- שָׁלָה, *despoiler*. Plural, \* הַשָּׁלֵכִין, *the despoilers*, line 4. This word does not occur in this sense in the Hebrew Bible, nor is the plural to be found.
- שָׁלֹשׁ, cardinal number *three*. Plural, שְׁלֹשִׁין, *thirty*, line 2; frequently in Hebrew.
- שָׁם, *there*, line 30. הֵשָׁם, *from there*, lines 12, 17; frequently in the Hebrew Scriptures.
- שָׁנָא, *enemy*. Plural with suffix, first person, שָׁנָאִי, *my enemies*, line 4; Comp. Ps. xli. 8.
- שַׁעַר, *a gate*. Plural with suffix, third person, שַׁעְרֶיהָ, *its gates*, line 22; in Hebrew twice. Comp. Lament. i. 4, ii. 9.
- שִׁירָן \* p. n., *Siran*, line 13; not in the Hebrew Scriptures. Perhaps the Hebrew שִׁירָן *Sharon*, comp. Commentary on line 13.
- שָׁנָה, \* *year*, lines 2, 8, 34; not in the Hebrew Bible.