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THE ROEBUCK.

THE existence of the roebuck in Palestine was, I believe, unknown before a specimen was brought to me at Haifa in 1872. Dr. Tristram did not know of it apparently when he published his "Natural History of the Bible," in 1868, and he would, no doubt, acknowledge the source of his notice in the "Memoirs." The specimen taken to Cambridge by Mr. C. F. T. Drake in 1873 was pronounced to be the same as the English roebuck. I have also noticed its existence in the woods of Mount Gilead, where it appears to be called *Hamdr* instead of *Yahmūr* the name which I ascertained on Carmel.

C. R. C.

MASHITA.

I HAVE not Major Conder's last book by me at the time of writing but I think he states in it that the question whether the conjecture which assigns the building at Mashita to Chosroes is right, must depend upon the deciphering of the inscriptions which may be found there. My wife and I have visited Mashita twice; once in 1888, and again in April of this year (1890); and on both occasions I made diligent search without being able to discern any inscription whatever, except the "Wusn" marks of the Arabs. My wife, on the occasion of our last visit, took thirteen photographs, and if these turn out well on being developed at home, I will send you copies. Some of the detail of ornamentation (which seems to me very Persian in style) is exceedingly fine. I have no description of the ruin by me, and may be merely repeating what is well known, when I give the following particulars, but the place is so seldom visited that I will venture. The main erection and enclosure are built to the cardinal points of the compass; the sculptured front of the latter and the gateway being to the south. The appearance of the ruin fully supports the theory that the buildings were never finished, as there is nothing like the requisite amount of material on the spot for completion of the work, and no building near in which the material could have been used up. The nearest building is the Khân Zitza, on the Haj road, of which, if I remember right, there is some account in Mr. Doughty's book. But this place was too far for me to visit conveniently. There is no other building nearer than Madeba (about four hours' journey), where the houses are all recently built out of cut stones found at that spot, and, therefore, the material cannot have been used up there.

The outside of the west and inside side of the east walls of the enclosure at Mashita are much worn and decayed, whilst the inside of the west and outside of the east walls are fresh looking. This is