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A CORRECTION.

By W. H. D. ROUSE, Esq., M.A.

ALLOW me to point out a slip which has crept into the last *Quarterly Statement*, p. 203. *χρηστὴ χαίρει* has nothing to do with the word Christ, but is one of the commonest sepulchral formulæ in Greek ("Good friend, farewell"). No doubt the same is true of *χρεστὴ*, on p. 201, but the whole inscription is not given.

CHELTENHAM COLLEGE,
July 18th, 1894.

NOTES ON MR. DAVIS' PAPER.

By Major C. R. CONDER, R.E.

THE author having kindly showed me this paper, and asked me to add any remarks that occurred to me, I venture to make a few, though little can be added to such a scholarly explanation of the Siloam text—a subject never as yet fully treated in the publications of the Palestine Exploration Fund.

The word *נקבה*, in the sense of a "rock cutting," survives to the present day in Palestine, in the term *Nukb* (masc), for artificial passages cut in cliffs, as will be seen in the Name Lists of the Survey Memoirs.

There can be no doubt that the translation of the sixth line of the inscription is at present very uncertain. It must have recorded something important in connection with the levels or measurements—perhaps the difference of level of the two galleries where they met.

The hieroglyphic origin of the alphabet is not disputed by any scholar. The Egyptian origin was always denied by the late Dr. Robertson Smith, and seems to present many difficulties. All attempts to trace a derivation directly from the Cuneiform have failed, and there only remains one other known source, namely, the hieroglyphic system of Syria, usually called "Hittite." My impression is that this system developed first the syllabary known in Cyprus, and afterwards—either independently or directly—the Syrian Alphabet and the larger Ionian Alphabet, which is closely connected with the Cypriote. This view is supported by the resemblances between *ה* and the Cypriote *E*; *ך* and the Cypriote *u*; *ח* and the Cypriote *Khe*; *כ* and the Cypriote *Ke*; *מ* and the Cypriote *Mi*; *ץ* and the Cypriote *ô*; *פ* and the Cypriote *Pe*; *ר* and the Cypriote *Ra*; *ש* and the Cypriote *Se*.

As regards the hieroglyphic origin, there seems little doubt that *Aleph* represents a "bull's" head and horns, and the Cuneiform sign noticed by

Mr. Davis (No. 232) is also, in its oldest form, the bull's head. The same sign occurs often on Hittite monuments.

The suggestion as to *Gimel* is novel, as is also that about *Zain* (supported by the peculiar form of the letter as appearing on the Siloam text). The sign for *Yod*, "the open hand," and that for *Caph*, "the closed hand," both resemble signs used in Hittite. The sign for *Resh* is also exactly like one of the most peculiar of the Hittite hieroglyphs. These comparisons have the advantage of accounting for the names of the letters, which have never been explained by the theory of Egyptian origin.

NOTES ON THE "QUARTERLY STATEMENT."

By Major C. R. CONDER, R.E.

THE *July Statement*, 1894, contains very valuable papers, and shows continued vitality in the Society.

P. 171. The discoveries on Zion seem to confirm the conjecture that Hadrian's Wall on the south side of Jerusalem followed the old line. I do not think there is any evidence that the Phœnicians used drafted masonry before the Greek period. The "pock-marked" dressing occurs on the later Roman masonry in Palestine, and the stones with rude bosses usually belong to this period. The Jewish masonry of the second century, B.C., and of the Herodian period (at 'Arâk el Emîr 170 B.C., and at Jerusalem) has drafted stones with the faces carefully finished and flat. The "comb dressing" occurs at Jerusalem but not at 'Arâk el Emîr. There is nothing to surprise us in the discovery of Crusaders' work on Zion, as the great Church of Holy Zion was close by. Mr. Maudslay found a Crusaders' tombstone during the course of his excavations.

P. 172. I think that the pick-marks in the plaster indicate that a finer layer of cement once covered the picked surface. Such is at least often the case in the lining of cisterns, as I have had occasion to notice.

P. 175. If Dr. Bliss carries out excavations at Jericho I hope he will select the months of February and March. The autumn at Jericho is most deadly. There can to my mind be no doubt that the building at Kh. Mefjir is some kind of hospice or monastery. The apse, which now seems to be destroyed, appeared to me to be evidently Norman work of the twelfth century, and I should be inclined to ascribe the ornamentation to about 1130 A.D. Dr. Bliss may be able to compare it with that on the south door of the Cathedral of the Holy Sepulchre, and in the Church of St. Mary la Grande just opposite. The early Crusaders adopted a semi-Byzantine style, and their Gothic work belongs to the latter half of the twelfth century. The plans of the monasteries at Kasr Hajlah and Kasr el Yehûd may be compared with that of the building at Kh. Mefjir. The ruins at Er Rîha are naturally of twelfth century, since this was the