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THE
ISRAELITISH AUTHORSHIP
OF THE
SINAITIC INSCRIPTIONS

REV. C. FORSTER

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THE
ISRAELITISH AUTHORSHIP
OF THE
SINAITIC INSCRIPTIONS
VINDICATED

AGAINST THE INCORRECT "OBSERVATIONS"
IN THE
"SINAI AND PALESTINE"

OF THE
REV. ARTHUR PENRHYN STANLEY, M.A.
CANON OF CANTERBURY.

A Letter

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
THE LORD LYN DHURST,

BY
THE REV. CHARLES FORSTER, B.D.
ONE OF THE SIX PREACHERS OF CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL, AND RECTOR OF STICED, ESSEX;
AUTHOR OF "THE ONE PRIMEVAL LANGUAGE."

LONDON:
RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET;
Publisher in Ordinary to Her Majesty.
1856.

“ Ne seroient-ce pas ici les sépulchres de la convoitise, dont il est fait mention Nomb. xi. 34. ? — Il n'étoit point défendu aux Israélites d'employer les figures hiéroglyphiques.” — NIEBUHR

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New-street-Square.

A L T T E R,

&c. &c.

MY DEAR LORD,

The interest which you have taken in the subject of my work on the Sinaitic Inscriptions, as matter for serious inquiry, and thorough investigation, and your effectual interposition with Her Majesty's late Government and the authorities at the Horse-Guards (in conjunction with another noble friend)*, to promote further inquiry, and secure a fuller investigation, unite to point you out as the authority, to whom I can with most propriety address the following letter; and I thank you for the high privilege of being permitted to do so.

* The Earl of Harrowby, to whose kindness I owe the honour of being made personally known to your Lordship; and to whose cordial co-operation in promoting effectual inquiry into the whole subject of the Sinaitic Inscriptions, I, in common with all who take a Christian interest in that subject, am deeply indebted.

Its occasion and its object may be stated in a few words. In his newly published volume of *Travels*, entitled "Sinai and Palestine," the Rev. Arthur Penrhyn Stanley has thought it proper to pronounce judgment, in a foot-note of a few lines, upon the whole argument and conclusions of my work,—a judgment which will of course be implicitly acquiesced in by all believers (and they seem to be not a few) in Mr. Stanley's infallibility. I am not a controversialist; and most unwilling to become one. Anonymous censure, accordingly (with a single and unavoidable exception *) I have uniformly met by silence: on the principle of the great Dr. Bentley, "that no author was ever written down, except by himself." But the case assumes a different aspect when a writer of name and character, and of great popularity, affixes his name to a published censure of a work, which has long and deeply engaged public interest, and which treats of a subject of inquiry held, by some of the first minds in England or Europe, to be one of the very highest interest and importance. In a case like this, the duty of an author becomes changed.

* The vindication of the theory of a former work, "Mahometanism Unveiled," against a violent attack, in the old "British Critic," as unmeasured in expression, and as unsupported by proofs, as that even of Chevalier Bunsen.

He is no longer to consider himself, but what he owes to the wide public, and to what he believes to be the cause of truth.

On this conscientious principle it is that I now, most reluctantly, break silence, to bring Mr. Stanley and his recently pronounced censure before the impartial tribunal of your Lordship's and the public judgment. In doing this, I shall studiously avoid all that relates to philology, and everything else that can be accounted abstruse or obscure, in the great question at issue between us. I shall confine myself strictly to statements of facts, of facts capable of being decided on before any English judge, by any English jury. In taking this course, I am well aware that I avail myself to its fullest extent of the privilege of addressing one whose judgment in all cases where *evidences* are concerned will be recognised, by the universal suffrage of these countries, as alike above question, and beyond appeal.

Before I proceed further, it is necessary to observe that, with regard to the question of the authorship of the Sinai inscriptions, Mr. Stanley and I have widely different interests at stake. To him, as an avowed unbeliever in their Israelitish origin, the question is one of perfect indifference and of total insignificance; to me, who fully and firmly believe in that origin, and who

have impressed my convictions, not on the many merely, but upon minds of the highest order, by the same proofs which originally produced them in my own mind, the question, as one of new yet contemporary witness to the Mosaic Scriptures, is one the most solemn, and the most important that can be presented to the mind of man. The wideness of the gulf between us will soon be measured by our widely different treatment of the common subject before us. Mr. Stanley writes like one who would blow away my argument with a breath of his mouth, as the child blows away the down from the top of the thistle; but it might have been well for him to have recalled to mind its motto, "Nemo me impune lacessit," and to have remembered that the child who meddles unadvisedly with the thistle, sometimes comes in for its sting. With his private opinions no one has any right to interfere, he is free to entertain and promulgate them at will. But the man who once commits himself with the public must abide the issue; he has no longer a way of escape. To that great tribunal Mr. Stanley has made his appeal; and to that tribunal I also appeal to judge between us. Courtesy, I trust, on either side will never be forgotten, but I can never compromise or compliment away what I hold to be the truth.

Privately, in common with all who know him, I can entertain towards Mr. Stanley only sentiments of kindness; we are members of the same cathedral, we have been brought into still nearer relation by mutual intimacy with common friends; but these considerations, I am sure your Lordship will agree in feeling, can serve only to increase the obligation and observance of the golden rule, "Amicus Socrates, amicus Plato, magis amica veritas."

But it is time Mr. Stanley should speak for himself; and he shall now come before your Lordship in his own words. In a note appended to his notice of HAZEROTH, and of the miracle of the "feathered fowls," he thus pronounces sentence *ex cathedrâ* upon the whole argument and conclusions of "The Voice of Israel from the Rocks of Sinai":—

"Mr. Forster's Voice of Sinai, p. 180. I do not mean to guarantee the accuracy of his translation, or the applicability of his remarks to the especial subject of which he is there speaking. But I am unwilling to withhold this slight illustration of *almost the only conclusion in that work which received any confirmation from my observations.*" *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 82. note 4.*

* For "the latest and most scientific hypothesis on the subject and language of these [the Sinaitic] inscriptions," Mr. Stanley refers his

This judgment is so sweeping as to condemn the whole work, and so indefinite as to leave his readers in total ignorance of the grounds and justice of that condemnation. The sentence, at the same time, is so vaguely worded as to render it very difficult to bring him to the proof; and the difficulty would be still greater but for his use of the word "observations." For "observations" are tangible; they can be looked out for in his volume; they can be examined point by point in comparison with the "conclusions" to

readers to the "Christianity and Mankind" of Chevalier Bunsen, vol. iii. pp. 231, &c. In consequence of this reference having procured the volume, and read the whole of the context referred to, I cannot but express my surprise and regret (for his own sake) that a brother clergyman, professing friendly sentiments, should recommend with unqualified approval to public attention a context, the tone and spirit of which, in its concluding pages (238, 239), can reflect only on the distinguished writer.

I have yet to learn that vituperation is criticism, or invective argument. Are they not rather the proverbial accompaniments of a bad and bankrupt cause? Arts of controversy like these remind one rather of "a certain orator named Tertullus," and of his clients of the Sanhedrim, who "laid many and grievous complaints against Paul, *which they could not prove.*" It was a saying of good King George III., that "when it comes to abuse, there is pretty well an end to argument." Such learned courtesies may suit the atmosphere of Bohn or Jena; but *μη γένοιτο* that they should ever become acclimated in the classic air of Oxford. Of one thing, at least, I can assure Mr. Stanley, that his learned friend and ally (of whom I would speak with all the respect due to his personal character, and to his late high office) is perfectly secure from any reprisals in kind on my part, as no amount of provocation should betray any one possessing self-respect into language unbecoming a scholar and a gentleman.

which he here opposes them. To the test of this examination they shall now be brought, and it shall be left with your Lordship and the British public to decide where the right lies; whether Mr. Stanley's "observations," or my "conclusions," are supported and borne out by the facts of the case.

The first and most important observations he could make, so far as the Sinaitic Inscriptions are concerned, evidently respect the heights or elevations at which those inscriptions are found. For though the question of greater or lesser elevation does not in the least affect the question of their Israelitish authorship, because the Israelites, like any other people, would naturally avail themselves of the rock-tablets easiest of access and nearest at hand, for the purpose of engraving their records, yet, as an argument *à fortiori* of the strongest kind, instances of high elevations are of great force in favour of the Israelites, because any such examples imply settlement, establishment, in the localities, and both leisure and instrumentality for their execution. It was in this point of view, as an *argumentum à fortiori*, that, in my work, I dwelt on the subject of the elevation. The adversaries, however, affect to regard this point as vital in the question at issue, and accordingly have strained their utmost efforts to

disprove it, as if thereby disposing of the whole question. The sophism is so palpable that it is enough to point it out; it contains its own refutation.

My sense of the value of the point as an *à fortiori* proof, however, was so strong, that on Mr. Stanley's kindly seeking my acquaintance immediately after his return from Sinai, and himself leading the conversation to the subject of the Inscriptions, my first inquiry was directed to their elevations. His answer was: "All the inscriptions I have seen in the peninsula of Sinai, I can conceive that one Arab; with naked toes, standing on the shoulders of another, might have written." As a statement, as well as a story, seldom loses in the carriage, this ingenious hypothesis (as your Lordship is aware) in the hands of Mr. Stanley's friends, was advanced into the categorical assertion, that "There is not a single inscription at Sinai, which one Arab standing on the shoulders of another might not have written." Well aware of the controversial uses sure to be made of information like this, coming from the spot, and resting on such authority, I determined at once to seize the first opportunity of a severe and searching re-examination of the localities and inscriptions, with a view to the final settlement of a question,

of whose issue I had not the shadow of a doubt. That opportunity (as will presently appear) was, at the critical turning-point, most unexpectedly opened. But to return to Mr. Stanley: he has now published his account of the Inscriptions, and very specially of their elevations. I submit it in his own words:—

“ Their situation and appearance are such as in hardly any case requires more than the casual work of passing travellers. Again, *none* that I saw, unless it might be a very doubtful one at Petra, required ladders or machinery of any kind. Most of them could have been written by any one, who, having bare legs and feet, as all Arabs have, could take firm hold of the ledges, or by any active man even with shoes. I think there are *none* that could not have been written by one man climbing on another’s shoulder.”—*Sin. and Pal.* p. 60.

His theory, founded on this representation of the Inscriptions, and upon what he, after Beer, calls Christian Crosses, is this, that the whole of the Sinaitic Inscriptions are the work of Christian pilgrims (Arab pilgrims) in the fourth and fifth centuries, or down to within some fifty years of the age and Sinai voyage of Cosmas Indicopleustes! Before I seriously address myself to the discussion which he has thus raised,

1. I would observe that Mr. Stanley's theory is wholly the creature of his own imagination, unsupported by a single particle of historical or traditional proof; and 2. I would ask him how it happens, that while he has ingeniously invented employment for the feet of his ideal pilgrims, he seems wholly to have forgotten to make provision for his two-fold call upon their hands; for hands they must have to hold fast in their perilous position, and hands they must have (both hands) at the same time to work with. The rudest workmen require tools, the simplest tools require hands to use them. A punch and a mallet were the implements required for the execution of the very rudest of the Sinaitic Inscriptions. And with the punch in the left hand, and the mallet in the right, his toes, only, clinging to his comrade's neck, and his face against the rock, what becomes of the hold of his adventurous pilgrim? He is in imminent danger of life or limb, and much in the condition of Swift's "Captain of Horse," who

" never takes off his hat,
Because he has never a hand that is idle,
For one holds the sword, and the other the bridle."

The plight of a single pilgrim, thus mounted, would have been bad enough; but what shall

we think when it comes to hundreds? for hundreds upon hundreds of Arab pilgrims must have been thus employed, since all inscriptions, at elevations above five or six feet, would have required the same grotesque, at once, and perilous process.

But to pass from these day-dreams to serious realities, I now would ask, by what title does Mr. Stanley, in his calculations of the heights of the inscriptions, undertake thus superciliously to pass by in silence, the recorded and published testimony of an English gentleman, and an English clergyman, the late Rev. G. F. Grey? a man to whom England and Europe have owed a debt of gratitude for the last thirty-seven years, for the only large and legible body of Sinaïtic inscriptions, until within the last few years, ever brought into Europe. That distinguished traveller has specified many of the inscriptions as "high up," and given specific heights of others, varying from twelve to twenty feet; while the elevation of two marked by Mr. Grey only "high up," has been now ascertained, by one who scaled to them, to be "about forty feet."

In thus ignoring Mr. Grey's published statements, Mr. Stanley is surely without excuse. He went to Sinai, not as an ordinary tourist,

but as a scholar and a hebraist, a critic and censor of all his predecessors. If he had not with him Grey's or Beer's collections, he had, I have reason to know, my volume in his hands: that volume gave, in the compactest form, all Mr. Grey's inscriptions marked "high up," together with his specifications, wherever noted, of the particular heights. In the face of this evidence, imperatively calling on him to re-examine each specified inscription, and either to verify or rectify those published by Mr. Grey, Mr. Stanley undertakes to deny the existence of a single inscription above the height of eight or nine feet. If he somewhat qualifies the assertion by the expressions "none that I saw," or "I think there are none," I answer, that, going as he did, and publishing as he proposed to do, it was his business and bounden duty to tell us, not what *he thinks*, but what *he knows*. I repeat, it was his duty to the cause of truth and justice, before he ventured to ignore Mr. Grey's calculations or to publish his own, to revisit, to re-examine, to re-calculate, to re-measure, every "high up" inscription pointed out to him by that gentleman; to ascertain that Mr. Grey's twenty feet "high up" inscription was under ten feet. They are all at a given part of the Wady Mokatteb, open "to be seen and read of all

men:" they have been since seen and read by others, why should they not have been seen and read by him? He, however, who pronounces thus authoritatively upon the uniform lowness of their elevations, has not himself copied or corrected a single inscription, and does not appear to have examined one.

What Mr. Stanley, however, neglected to do, others happily have, since his visit, done. In the spring of 1854, an opportunity the most unexpected presented itself to my lamented relative the late Captain Henry Thomas Butler (subsequently of the staff in the Crimea) of accompanying his brother, the Rev. Pierce Butler, on a tour to Egypt and Sinai. By your Lordship's interposition, already alluded to, leave was asked for him by Lord Aberdeen, and granted by Lord Hardinge; and he proceeded to Sinai *viâ* Egypt, in company with his brother, as the accredited agent of the British Government for the special objects of his mission. He went on it with the zeal of a Christian soldier, and with that high sense of duty which characterized him through life and in death, which headed the advance at the carrying of the heights of Amoy, "and seized the first colours from the enemy*;" and which led him on

* Sir Hugh (now Viscount) Gough's dispatch.

(like his brother "the hero of Silistria") to fall gloriously on the heights of Inkermann, sword in hand, in the front of battle, in the act of rallying and leading on to victory the shattered but indomitable Guards.

The brothers proceeded together to Tôr, where Captain Butler expended ten days of indefatigable labour in the attempt to recover the two great Sinaïtic inscriptions, discovered in 1779 by the Comte d'Antraigues, but without success. He ascertained only that there are no valleys near Tôr; and that the valley of the inscriptions must be sought further north, towards Suez; information highly valuable for future English travellers, if only like-minded.

It was on his route from Tôr, through the Wâdy Hibran, that Captain Butler visited the Wâdy Mokatteb. I had specially directed his and Mr. Pierce Butler's attention to the strictest possible re-examination of the heights of the Inscriptions copied by Mr. Grey, as well as to the most careful observation of the elevations of the Inscriptions at large.

The results have just reached me from the Crimea. Captain Butler's annotated copy of Grey's collection of inscriptions is now in my possession, together with his own and his brother's copies (some of the most important of them, casts) of about thirty new Sinaïtic Inscriptions, and ten or

twelve of the inscriptions called Egyptian. I shall only add, that the perfect accuracy of Mr. Grey's calculations of the heights, and the consequent incorrectness of Mr. Stanley's statement, have been placed by the Messrs. Butler beyond question or appeal. They have themselves verified old and copied new inscriptions, at heights varying from ten, to twenty, thirty, and even forty feet; some perpendicular as walls.

As the most effectual way of bringing this *vexata quæstio* of the elevations to a short and decisive issue, I shall now confront with Mr. Stanley's general assertions the notes of the Messrs. Butler taken on the spot, and giving the heights of a series of the inscriptions (partly Mr. Grey's, and partly new inscriptions copied by themselves), as ascertained by them from strict inspection and accurate calculations.

STATEMENTS OF THE ELEVATIONS.

Mr. A. P. Stanley.

"Their situation and appearance is such as in hardly any case requires more than the casual work of passing travellers."

The Messrs. Butler.

"Grey, No. 5. Rock high up: Perfect."

Note by Capt. Butler.

"N. side of the valley, but facing *East*. About 40 feet from ground: not easily accessible, but I climbed to it.— H. T. B."

B

“None that I saw, unless it might be a very doubtful one at Petra, required ladders or machinery of any kind.”

“I think there are none that could not have been written by one man climbing on the shoulder of another.”

Sinai and Palestine, p. 60.

“Grey, No. 3. Rock, Perfect.”

Note by Capt. Butler.

“On the same rock, and on the same level with No. 5.—H. T. B.”

“Grey, No. 9. Loose Stone high up: Perfect.”

Note by Capt. Butler.

“Twelve or fourteen feet from ground: not easily accessible.”

“Grey, No. 56. Rock high up: Perfect.”

Note by Capt. Butler.

“About ten feet from ground: inaccessible without a ladder.—H. T. B.”

“Grey, No. 61. Rock high up (about 20 feet) in a place where the winter torrent has undermined the slope: Perfect.”

Note by Capt. Butler.

“Others on the same rock by different hands. About ten yards to right of No. 56. Inaccessible.—H. T. B.”

“Grey, No. 74. Rock high up: Entire.”

Note by Capt. Butler.

“Conf. No. 9.—H. T. B.”

[Apparently two examples of the same inscription.—C. F.]

“Grey, No. 139. Perfect. I am not *sure* [sic.] that the space I have left before the last line, ought to exist.”

Notes by Capt. Butler.

“Generally correct, but not perfectly so. I have made a correct copy of this.—H. T. B.”

“The first line appears evidently by a different hand. There is a space here [after the 3rd line], and *also* between the 2nd and 3rd lines.”

“N. side of Wâdy facing South.”

“About 20 feet from ground, but accessible. Another in one line, 4 feet higher, *inaccessible*.—H. T. B.”

“Grey, No. 142. Perfect.”

Note by Capt. Butler.

“Very near 139.” [apparently of similar height.—C. F.]

“Grey. Specimens of the different Greek characters found in the Waady El Mukatteb:

the first almost appears mixed with the unknown character.

“ No. 1.

“ The original is enclosed by lines drawn as seen here ; it is on the Rock, in a situation now inaccessible. Appears perfect, and is not cut, but rather *dotted* out with a pointed instrument, *like all the inscriptions of the unknown character*. The hand also, of all the part enclosed seems the same. Over the first line is the figure of a man with uplifted hands, and under the Greek a horse.”

Notes by Capt. Butler.

“ I climbed to this by means of my iron bedstead, with considerable difficulty, and some danger ; and so corrected the copy. It is about 18 feet from the ground ; and my tent was pitched all Sunday, the 2nd April, 1854, in a little Wâdy within 150 yards of it.—H. T. B.”

“ No. 73. is between this, and the place where my tent was.”

“ Rocks scaled off from here.”

[*i. e.* above the inscription.]

[Captain Butler has corrected

Mr. Grey's copy, which was partially imperfect, owing to the elevation; and has added drawings of the horse (which is galloping) and of the man with uplifted hands.—C. F.]

From these decisive confirmations of Mr. Grey's altitudes, and complete refutations, consequently, of Mr. Stanley's sweeping assertions respecting the heights of the inscriptions, I proceed, in the next place, to the evidences to the same purpose supplied by the new inscriptions copied by the Messrs. Butler themselves. Before, however, entering upon this topic, I would observe, that Mr. Grey's testimony extends far beyond the inscriptions examined by Captain Butler; since he has many inscriptions beside, marked "high up," and we now know, with certainty, the value of that mark, which includes elevations of from 10 to 40 feet.

THE BUTLER INSCRIPTIONS.

STATEMENTS OF THE ELEVATIONS.

Mr. A. P. Stanley.

"All the inscriptions I have seen in the peninsula of Sinai, I can con-

The Messrs. Butler.

"No. 6. 28th March, 1854. Near Jebel Nakous, right-hand side, just at the entrance of a deep cleft in the rock. About

ceive one Arab, with naked toes, standing on the shoulders of another might have written."

12 feet from the ground, but accessible by a broad ledge." (Note by Capt. H. T. Butler.)

"No. 11. W. side of Wâdy Hibran, about three hours from its southern end, at a convex bend where the valley is rather wide. A ravine, opposite to S. of which is a pyramidal hill.

"(a) On the original rock, about 20 feet from the ground, but easily accessible. *

"(b) Granite rock, scratched. About 20 yards N. of (a), and a little lower. 31st March, 1854."

Wady Solaf.

"No. 12. (c) A *shivered* rock† to left, coming from Tor, about $2\frac{1}{2}$ or $2\frac{3}{4}$ miles from the mouth of Wâdy Nukb Ejawy, and one minute after passing a Wâdy (in which there is water), coming

* "Eastern side of Wâdy Hibran, about 10 minutes north of the above: on the face of the rock at a salient angle, where the road turns towards a high mountain. About 25 feet from the ground, but easily accessible. 31st March, 1854."

(Notes by Captain H. T. Butler.—C. F.)

† One of the λίθους τοὺς ἐκ τῶν ὀρέων ἀποκλωμένους, noticed by Cosmos Indicopleustes?—C. F.

down from W.S.W. 31st March, 1854." [Id. ib.]

"No. 13. 1st April, 1854.

"Wâdy Feiran, at a salient angle, where the road going towards Wâdy Mokatteb turns to the left, opposite to Wâdy.

"25 feet from the ground, but accessible by climbing.

"Other inscriptions nearer the ground, which I had not time to copy." (Note by Captain H. T. Butler.—C. F.)

"No. 14. 3rd April, 1854.

"North side of Wâdy Mukatteb, facing nearly due south.

"(a) About 3 feet above (b), and inaccessible.

"(b) Grey.

"No. 139, but incorrectly copied by him, having probably been done from the ground. When close to it, the whole is perfectly clear and distinct.

"The upper part, fully 20 feet from the ground, but accessible without difficulty, and there is a narrow ledge to stand upon, about 6 feet below the top line of (b)."

(Note by Captain H. T. Butler.
—C. F.).

Rev. Pierce Butler, M.A.

“(I.) Wâdy Magharah (entrance) left side. On rough face of sand-stone rock, about 30 feet from ground, very difficult of access. (Characters 10 inches long.)

“(II.) Same rock. (Characters 6 inches long).—P. B. March 29. 1854.”

“(III.) Wâdy Maghara — rock — a little lower than I. and II.

“(IV.) Wâdy Maghara, near previous inscriptions. — P. B. March 29. 1854.”

“(VIII.) Wâdy Maghara, about 14 feet from ground.

“Other inscriptions on same rock.—P. B. March 29. 1854.”

“(V.) Wâdy Maghara (about 11.)

“(VI.) Wâdy Maghara, about 10 feet from ground, but now inaccessible.

“(VII.) Do.—P. B. March 29. 1854.”

The new elevations here submitted to your Lordship, again put a decisive negative upon Mr. Stanley's representation of the low level at which, according to him, the Inscriptions are exclusively found. For these elevations, whether marked "easily accessible," "accessible by climbing," or "inaccessible," are all out of the category of his hypothesis: being either wholly beyond the reach of his gymnastic pilgrims; or so situated as altogether to preclude the idea of their execution by his "passing travellers," who must have had very different employment, for the brief pauses of a toilsome journey, from that of climbing cliffs to write their names. But, except to a daring "cragman," some of the highest elevations now in question are absolutely inaccessible, being on the face of sandstone cliffs perpendicular as house-walls. Examples of this character are so important in the evidences, that I must give a specimen, *instar omnium*, from the account of it given me by Mr. Pierce Butler. His Inscriptions numbered (I.), (II.), (III.), (IV.), he discovered in the Wādy Mahāra; the first two at the height of thirty feet from the ground, the others a very little lower, on the face of a perpendicular sandstone cliff. To all appearance, those Inscriptions were wholly inaccessible; but the sandstone lying in strata, presented seams at

intervals of some five or six feet ; and Mr. Butler, accustomed to scale the face of the Giant's Causeway, and of the other gigantic cliffs of the County of Antrim, contrived to climb this wall by means of its slight fissures, and holding on with the left hand, to copy with the right the Inscriptions which, by this perilous process, he had succeeded in reaching. His Arabs and his dragoman beneath gave him up for lost ; repeatedly ejaculating, after their fashion, that he must be killed. To their utter astonishment, however, he ascended and descended in safety, bringing down fac-similes of the life-imperiling records.

It will be remembered that examples like these, from particular localities, are only "specimen venientis ævi:" that the rocks of Sinai and its peninsula, wherever attaining to like elevations, doubtless present numbers more of like inaccessibility to reward the labours of future enterprising travellers ; and to put a final extinguisher upon the extraordinary assertion, "that there is not a single inscription in the peninsula of Sinai which one Arab with naked toes, climbing on the shoulders of another, might not have written."

The observations next in interest, and equal in importance, respect the numbers, the extent,

and the internal marks (if any such there be), illustrating the age and authorship of the Inscription. To these several points accordingly, Mr. Stanley's "observations" address themselves, with what success now remains to be seen. But before I follow him upon this ground, I must pause to notice and remonstrate against the depreciatory, I had almost said the contemptuous tone, in which he speaks of the Sinaitic Inscriptions, and of everything connected with them. It is, throughout, the tone of an advocate who has prejudged the cause at issue. But to return to his "observations."

1. *Numbers of the Inscriptions.*—"Their numbers seem to me to have been greatly exaggerated. I had expected in the Wâdy Mokatteb to see both sides of a deep defile* covered with thousands. Such is not the case by any means. The Wâdy Mokatteb is a large open valley, with no continuous wall of rock on either side, but masses of rock receding and advancing; and it is only or chiefly on these advancing masses, that the inscriptions straggle, not by thousands,

* It is Mr. Stanley's own fault that he was mistaken in the character of the Wâdy Mokatteb. Beer had accurately described both it and the single line of the inscriptions, and he had my published version of Beer's account for his guide: "To the left of the road, the traveller finds a chain of steep sand-stone rocks; these contain a vast multitude of tolerably well-preserved inscriptions."—*Voice of Israel*, pp. 9, 10.

but at most by hundreds or fifties. So, on Serbâl, I think we could hardly have overlooked any ; but we saw no more than *three*, though it is difficult to reconcile this with the statement of Burckhardt, that he had there seen many inscriptions. *They are much less numerous than the scribblings of the names of Western travellers on the monuments in the Valley of the Nile, since the beginning of this century.*"

In this passage, it is the sentence marked with italics which calls for especial attention. Does Mr. Stanley mean to say that "the scribblings" of which he speaks, exceed in numbers the whole of the inscriptions throughout the peninsula of Sinai? If he does, he is called upon to make good his statement : if he does not, he leaves his readers totally in the dark as to what he means ; or what portion of the Sinaitic Inscriptions he includes in his comparative estimates.

To that depreciatory estimate of their numbers, I oppose the unanimous testimony of all preceding travellers. "They are counted by thousands," says Lord Lindesay, speaking of those in the Wâdy Mokatteb alone: "We next came (says Dr. Lepsius) to the Wâdi Mokatteb, the 'valley with inscriptions,' which derives its name from the *immense numbers* of inscriptions which are to be found here in several places." Speak-

ing of those around Mount Serbâl, he adds, "I went up Wâdi Aleyât, passing *innumerable* rock-inscriptions." Elsewhere, as the result of his final observations, he pronounces, that "they must be the work of a *pastoral people*," i. e. of a people seated in the peninsula. The Comte d'Antraigues states that it would take six months' hard labour to copy those which he had seen. Now giving Mr. Stanley full credit for the absence of any conscious miscalculation, he must excuse me if, after the specimens we have had of, inexactness in his calculations of the altitudes of the Inscriptions, I prefer these authorities to his in the estimate of their numbers. The numerical amount of the Sinaïtic Inscriptions, indeed, I believe to be still a sealed book. I have intimated this belief in my published volume; and I am now enabled to supply fresh confirmation of its soundness, from the new informaton communicated by Mr. Pierce Butler.

In ascending the Wâdy Aleyât, on his way to the summit of Mount Serbâl, Mr. Butler observed traces of a path to the left, out of the usual track of the ascent, which led through a chaos of enormous rocks, evidently precipitated from the broken face of the perpendicular mountain above by some great convulsion of nature. Into this untrodden path he struck, and as he clambered

through these wrecks of nature, he discovered, to his great astonishment, that hundreds upon hundreds of the fallen stones were covered with Sinaitic Inscriptions. So numerous were the instances, that he added, he could state with safety "that every second stone was inscribed."

But there occurred a still more remarkable phenomenon. The granite rocks were largely interspersed with blocks of trap-stone: a species of stone black on the surface, but lemon-coloured inside. Now this peculiar material had been studiously selected by the Sinaitic engravers, as the receptacle for their Inscriptions; and the consequence was, that the Inscriptions carved on this material came out with the effect of a rubricated book, or illuminated manuscript; the black surface throwing out in relief the lemon-coloured Inscriptions. The proofs of thought and care, of taste and judgment, contained in this eclectic choice of material are such, as to require no other comment than the statement of the wonderful fact.

Extent of the Inscriptions.—Here, at least, all parties are agreed. There is no diversity of opinion as to the extent of the Sinaitic Inscriptions. Mr. Stanley here coincides with all preceding travellers. They stretch, on the western

side of the Peninsula, in broken or continuous succession, from the vicinity of Suez, through the Wâdys Wardan, Sidri, Mahara, Mokatteb, Firan, and Aleyât (exclusive of those in the Wâdys Nasb, Humr, and sundry more), up the side and to the summit of the giant Serbâl, whose lower part, the Wâdy Aleyât, is literally clothed with them. They stretch, on its eastern side, in great numbers, in the Ledja, along the table-plain between the Wâdy Sayal and the Wâdy el Ain, in the direction of Akaba. And they re-appear in the vicinity of Petra and Mount Hor, only, here, scattered and rare. In other words, they reach, on a rough calculation, along lines of two degrees in both directions, exclusive of the few vestiges of them at Petra, and in the neighbourhood of Mount Hor. But their central site is around Mount Serbâl, the leading avenues to which they throng in innumerable multitudes.

Now this statement of their extent is, in itself, an argument of the most commanding kind, for the oneness of their origin, and the oneness of their object : it points towards some one assignable cause, and some one particular people. The only rational question left open by the phenomena, is, what that cause, and who this people were? My solution of this great question is already before the world; let us now hear the

opposed and conflicting solutions of the adversaries.

Before coming upon their ground, I would pause to observe, that Mr. Stanley is constantly at a loss to trace the genuine path of the Israelites through the Peninsula, from their passage of the Red Sea, to their entrance into the land of Moab. He sees rival probabilities on all sides, and certainty on none. From the number of his alternatives, and the pendulousness of his decisions, one might suppose him discussing the tractless wastes of Central Asia, the great Desert of Africa, or the "Robot al Kala," or "deserted abode" of Southern Arabia, instead of part of a narrow peninsula, under a hundred miles in either direction of their routes along its western or eastern gulfs, and about seventy miles across in the latitudes of Mount Serbâl. To his hypothetical reasonings on their route, "if the Israelites took this road," "if the Israelites did pass anywhere through that region" (Hudera), I answer that the Israelites passed everywhere, were present everywhere, peopled and thronged the narrow Wâdys of the Peninsula, and its table-lands, its only inhabitable parts. Two millions of people, with their flocks and herds, crowded into this narrow compass, *must* have done so. Their main encampments, indeed, with their great leader at their head,

with the Tabernacle and the banners of the Tribes, preceded by the pillars of a cloud and of fire, kept one main line or route; but the pastors and their flocks, "the mixed multitude," and all whom we should call "followers of the camp," were scattered and spread abroad in every direction, and moved onward by every available pass. Mr. Stanley himself partially admits this, when he says, "Something [I should have said *everything*] may be allowed for the spread of the tribes of Israel through the whole peninsula:" and again, still more to the purpose, when he observes, "the great thoroughfare of the Desert, the longest, and widest, and most continuous of all the valleys, the Wâdy Es-Sheyke, would lead the great bulk of the host, with the flocks and herds, by the more accessible, though more circuitous, route into the central upland; whilst the chiefs of the people would mount directly to the same point by the Nakb Hôwy, and all would meet in the Wâdy Er-Raheh."

This correct, because only rational view of the case, narrows the question to the main route of Israelites. If it be asked, how are we to ascertain this route? I answer boldly and without reserve, *by the land-marks of the Sinaitic Inscriptions*. This is the true and only clue to the labyrinth of doubt and error in which Mr.

Stanley, and those who think with him, are lost. With this clue, all is clear; without it, all is doubt and darkness. Nay, this is the only true clue, the enemies of their Israelitish origin themselves being the judges; for happily these are united in the belief that SERBÂL is the true Mount Sinai; and that, if so, the Israelites certainly passed to Mount Serbâl through the Wâdys, Mahära, Mokatteb, Feiran, and Aleyat, being the main line of the Sinaïtic Inscriptions. It is needless to dwell upon the overwhelming force of this coincidence between the main localities of the Inscriptions, and the independent identification, by the adversaries themselves, of these main localities, with the main route of the Israelites on their way to Mount Sinai. It is enough for me to observe, that I entirely concur with Dr. Lepsius in his identification of Mount Serbâl with Mount Sinai; and that I am prepared, presently, to submit to your Lordship's consideration, further proofs of the soundness of this identification, of a character as original in themselves as they are strikingly illustrative of some unexplained, and hitherto inexplicable passages of Scripture. Meanwhile, I have a moral pleasure in thus publicly recognizing the merit of Dr. Lepsius's great discovery; and, while arrived myself at the same conclusion by a

wholly different process, in acknowledging obligation to one from whom, on so many and such important points, I am compelled altogether to differ.

Age and Authorship of the Inscriptions.

Pilgrimages and Pilgrims.—A profound judge of reasoning, Bishop Sherlock, observes, that paradoxes commonly originate with some one of name and note, and are afterwards received and adopted implicitly by others. Seldom has there been a juster remark, and seldom has the remark been more fully exemplified than in the postulate of the anti-Israelite theory at which we have now arrived. John Lewis Burckhardt, I believe, first started the idea, that the Sinaitic Inscriptions were the work of Christian pilgrims; and from that day forward the idea of pilgrims and pilgrimages seems to have taken complete possession both of the learned and the unlearned world. The idea is a paradox without the shadow of a proof. I venture to pronounce it a vast and mere illusion. Cosmas and his companions heard nothing, knew nothing of these Christian pilgrimages: yet he visited Sinai in the year 518, just before the accession of Justinian, or within 150 years of the pilgrims of Professor

Beer, perhaps within less than 50 of some of the pilgrims of Mr. Stanley. He was himself a monk at the time when he composed his work, and sure therefore to learn all that could be known or told about pilgrims and pilgrimages to Sinai. Had he known or heard of them, he assuredly would have told us. Has he done so? On the contrary, he tells us the Jewish tradition, and his own conviction that the Inscriptions which he saw at Sinai were the work of the Israelites at the period of the Exode. Are Professors Beer and Tuch, or Messrs. Bunsen and Stanley, more competent and credible witnesses to the state of the question in his day, than Cosmas Indicopleustes?

To resume Mr. Stanley's "Observations," he gives this opinion as their result, that the Sinaïtic Inscriptions were the work of Christian pilgrims in the fourth and fifth centuries. Poor Beer had left, at least, 150 years between *his* pilgrims and Cosmas, to give time for their pilgrimage being forgotten, and their language and characters being lost. Short allowance, it is true, but better than less. But Mr. Stanley brings down his to within 50, possibly to within 20 years of Cosmas's time and visit. That faithful chronicler was treading upon their heels, yet never heard of their existence.

But these "Old Mortalities" have neither rest, nor division of labour; Mr. Stanley keeps them coursing up and down like so many "Canterbury Pilgrims," from Suez to Serbâl, and from Serbâl to Petra: for he tells us, that *the same Arab Christians* who wrote their names in the Wâdy Mokatteb, engraved the granite blocks on the summit of Mount Serbâl, and the characters on the steps of the Deir, at Petra. From the consideration that the Serbâl, Akaba, and Petra, were so many *culs de sac*, he infers that each of these points was, to his pilgrims, connected with some object of special veneration, which would account for their otherwise inexplicable progresses to "passages that lead to nothing." Has Mr. Stanley forgotten that God's people Israel were at all three places? That Israel was at Mount Sinai, at Elath, at Mount Hor? Is invention to be tasked in order to account for phenomena which are completely and historically explicable from the Mosaic Scriptures?

Greek and Roman Inscriptions. — Amidst the innumerable multitudes of the Sinaitic Inscriptions, there occur, as your Lordship is already well aware, a few Greek and Latin ones; so scant in their number, and so different in their execution, as to mark them out at once, to the eye of common sense, as (comparatively) recent super-

fetations. For, as Mr. Grey has stated, these inscriptions are all *cut*, not punched in or *dotted out*, as are all the Sinaïtic. The Greek is barbarous, and the contents (with two signal exceptions) uniformly worthless, being records merely of names and memories. Now, however strange the fact, it is not the less certain, that these simple and useless records have alone suggested to the opponents of an Israelitish origin, their whole theory as to the contents and origin of the unknown Sinaïtic Inscriptions. Because they saw names and adjurations by Pagans, Jews, or Christains (for it is mostly impossible to say which) in the Greek, they at once assumed that the unknown Sinaïtic records could consist only of names and adjurations. The Greek, in a word, served, as their Procastes' bed, to which they cut down their Sinaïtic patients.

I have spoken of these Greek and Roman inscriptions as altogether worthless: amidst this rubbish of names and memories, however, there happily occur two precious notes of history and date: the one, a Greek fragment self-evidently of the era of the Seleucidæ; the other, a Latin inscription, as self-evidently, of the age of Trajan, the conqueror of Petra, and of the kingdom of the Nabatheans. Both are military records: the Greek inscription, most probably

by a soldier of the army of Demetrius Polyor-
cetes, who besieged Petra B.C. circiter 315; the
Latin inscription, by a Roman legionary, at the
time of Trajan's conquest. The wording of
these inscriptions is alone a cogent argument for
their dates :

KAKON GENOC OYTOC
CTPATIQTHCEΓPAΨA
IIANEMIXI.*

This is the language of a Greek invader, new to
a savage country and people.

CESSENT SYRI
ANTE LATINOS
ROMANOS.

This, as I have before observed, is the language
of conquest; of a legionary in the very hour of
triumph, blotting out a hostile race and records.

Both inscriptions imply the presence of the
pre-existing Sinaïtic records by which they are
surrounded, and which seemed to provoke these
comments.

When I showed these chronicles, in Mr. Grey's
Collection, to the lamented friend to whom my

* Captain Butler's reading of this line is, IIANEMHXIP: its last word
reading: XIPI pro χσιμ.

work is inscribed, the late Sir Robert Harry Inglis, whose accuracy of mind made him peculiarly alive to points of chronology, he remarked, "This is real work; this is substantive evidence: for here we have CHRONOLOGY."

As fully sensible as Sir Robert Inglis himself of their chronological importance, I especially directed, in my first volume, public attention to these two records. I even pressed them upon the attention of the public (*Voice of Israel*, pp. 30—32.).

I did so, both because of their intrinsic value, and because their unquestionable dates gave a death-blow to Beer's theory, that the unknown inscriptions, so obviously long preceding them, were by Nabathean Christians of the fourth century.

I mention these circumstances, in order to fix your Lordship's attention upon the spirit of the adversaries with whom the cause I advocate has to contend. Notwithstanding my strong appeal to the judgment and candour of the learned to give these decisive documents their due weight and force, not one amongst them all has noticed or alluded to them. Professors Beer and Tuch, Messrs. Bunsen and Stanley, all alike would press into their service the evidence of a few barbarous and dateless inscriptions, while all of

them alike maintain a death-like silence respecting the only two published historical inscriptions contemporary with the events they record, and which alone outweigh all the Greek and Latin inscriptions to be found throughout the Peninsula!

Is this criticism? is this candour? is this the course and spirit to elicit truth?

But what is the harmony and unity among themselves of the learned phalanx, who are thus banded together against the idea of an Israelitish authorship? "They [the Sinaitic Inscriptions] are by Christians," says Professor Beer. "They are by Pagans," cries Professor Tuch.* "They are by Christians," repeats Mr. Stanley. "They are by Pagans, Jews, and Christians," exclaims Chevalier Bunsen. "They are of the fourth century of our era," pronounces Beer. "They are two or three centuries prior to the Christian era," declares Tuch. "They are of the fourth and fifth centuries," decides Stanley. "They are of an age, or ages, prior to the

* Tuch's pamphlet I have not seen; but I understand he refers the Inscriptions to certain pagan votaries, visitors of a Temple of Neptune, near Moyeleh, in the Tehama, or low coast of Hedjaz. When informed of this theory by a friend in Paris on its first appearance, I replied by inquiring whether his votaries of Neptune, like the land-crabs, climbed over the top of Mount Serbál to reach the low and level coast of Moyeleh and the Tehama?

Ptolemies," concludes Chevalier Bunsen, "and some of them, probably, of far more ancient times." *

Amidst this "jargon of contradictory opinions," which it might puzzle Sanchoniathon, Manetho, and Berosus themselves to match, what becomes of the solution of the main question at issue—the real age and authorship of the inscriptions themselves? We return to their lonely sites, the scene of the wanderings of God's people Israel. There they stand upon the living rocks, looking down in silent rebuke upon their many-tongued misinterpreters.

* "As to the age of the inscriptions, most of the writers of those of which we possess correct copies must have been pagans. There can scarcely be a doubt that there are among them Christian inscriptions. The frequent crosses leave no doubt about it. What is still called by ignorant people the *cruz ansata*, was probably intended to represent the Christian monogram for Christ. To this monogram and to the cross, indeed, all the Christian emblems in these inscriptions are easily reducible. Christians, therefore, did make pilgrimages to the mountain of the Law. Why might not Jews also? Why not pagans? And such pilgrims might also record their names, as all pilgrims and travellers like to do."—Bunsen, "*Christianity and Mankind*," vol. iii. p. 235.

"Who would deny *à priori* that some of our inscriptions might have an origin, at least much anterior to the Ptolemaic times, to which the Greek inscriptions seem to point. [Thanks are due to the learned Chevalier for getting us so much nearer to the Exode: he will get us to it, presently, as he goes on.] As yet, however, we have no proofs of it. *All the inscriptions which are not Greek are of one character.* All this, however, does not exclude *that there exist still more ancient inscriptions and monuments in the peninsula.*"—*Id. ib.*

There they stood in the age of Cosmas, more than thirteen hundred years ago, presenting then the same aspect of time-worn wreck and brokenness, which they present to the modern traveller at the present day.* The fact that monuments, presenting then and now the same time-worn appearance, have survived the age of Cosmas by nearly fourteen centuries, is conclusive ground for the inference that they may have preceded his time by as long, or by a still longer period. We return to the graphic description of that faithful chronicler, to whose trust-worthy fidelity even the rigid Montfauçon is compelled to pay an involuntary tribute. We read once more his living picture of the spectacle which broke unexpectedly upon his eyes, and whose existence

* When I asked Mr. Stanley, in reference to Cosmas's description of their state in his day, the *appearance* of the Sinaitic Inscriptions, his answer was, that they looked quite recent. I inquired what probable date their appearance might indicate. He replied about three or four centuries. I then observed, that, of course, this did not mean to impugn the testimony of Cosmas as to their existence, as he describes them, 1340 years ago; and, of course, was answered, Certainly not. I then repeated my published statement, that as they have survived the time of Cosmas by nearly fourteen centuries, looking then as broken as they do now, they might certainly have preceded his time by as many or by more centuries. To this remark he gave no answer.

I mention the conversation as an index to the spirit in which every indication or argument favouring the idea of an Israelitish origin was, from the outset, viewed.

he was the first to reveal to the Christian world:"
 "Ὅθεν ἐστὶν ἰδεῖν, ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἐρήμῳ τοῦ Σιναίου
 ὄρους, ἐν πάσαις καταπαύσεσι, πάντας τοὺς
 λίθους τῶν αὐτόθι, τοὺς ἐκ τῶν ὀρέων ἀπο-
 κλωμένων, γεγραμμένους γράμμασι γλυ-
 πτοῖς Ἑβραϊκοῖς· ὡς αὐτὸς ἐγὼ πεζεύσας τοὺς
 τόπους μαρτυρῶ. Ἄτινα καὶ τινες Ἰουδαῖοι ἀνα-
 γνόντες διηγοῦντο ἡμῖν, κ. τ. λ. Αὐτοὶ δὲ [οἱ
 Ἰσραηλῖται] ἐπλήθυνον γράφοντες, ὥστε πάντας
 τοὺς τόπους ἐκείνους μεστοὺς εἶναι γραμμαά-
 των Ἑβραϊκῶν γλυπτῶν, εἰς ἔτι καὶ νῦν
 σωζομένων, διὰ τοὺς ἀπίστους, ὡς ἔγωγε οἶμαι.
 Ἐξὸν δὲ τῷ βουλομένῳ ἐν τοῖς τόποις γενέσθαι καὶ
 θεάσασθαι, ἢ γοῦν ἐρωτῆσαι καὶ μαθεῖν περὶ
 τούτου, ὡς ἀλήθειαν εἶπομεν.

I ask your Lordship to read afresh this artless narrative, by one who saw what he describes, at the commencement of the sixth century; and who invites his readers to inform themselves, from other contemporary sources available and open to them, of the known existence of the monuments, and of the Jewish tradition that they were by the Israelites of the Exode. I ask whether, before controversy had "darkened counsel by words without knowledge," any reasonable man could entertain a rational doubt as to the historical value and amount of the evidences here presented to him? the writer

being of a good faith beyond all question; the facts, on a scale inexplicable on any ordinary theory; the Jewish tradition assigning them to the ancient Israelites, and the Israelites of the Exode, and they alone, having certainly been for forty years domiciliated in those very localities. Admit *their* claim to the authorship of the inscriptions, and all is clear, simple, and at unity with the phenomena. Deny this claim, and all becomes confused, perplexed, entangled, and you have as many contradictory opinions as you have theorists to write them.

But I would trouble these gentlemen with a still closer examination of the testimony of Cosmas Indicopleustes. For ought we know he had heard nothing, and knew nothing of their Christian pilgrims, or of any pilgrims whatever: certainly he knew nothing of pilgrims as having to say to the authorship; his testimony on the contrary wholly negatives the idea: yet he was on the spot, treading almost upon the heels of these visionary hadjis. When he composed his work, after an interval of seventeen years (518—535), he was himself a monk in a monastery at Alexandria; and certain, therefore, to have every opportunity of correcting his own impressions, if erroneous, from the fountain-head of information respecting pilgrimages and pilgrims.

Former brethren of his monastery were sure to have been of the number of those pilgrims (if there were any such), while all that was known, or could be told about pilgrimages, was certain to be known and spoken of within the convent walls; yet not one whisper reached his ear. The only Sinai pilgrims he speaks of were the ancient Israelites. Such was his ignorance in the age following those pilgrimages, within some fifty, or thirty, or twenty years of the last! Mr. Arthur Stanley, however, after the lapse of nearly 1400 years, is far better informed and more knowing than Cosmas: he knows all about them: "they were Christian pilgrims of the fourth and fifth centuries." He follows in their footsteps, but it is in visions only of his own imagination; he hears of them, but it is only from the echo of his own voice. But he has stronger evidence in reserve.

The sign of the Cross. — Beer's theory had but one leg to stand on, and that was a wooden one, his sign of the cross, which was easily knocked from under it. Mr. Stanley has picked up the broken crutch, and sets up his own borrowed theory to limp along upon it anew. Poor Beer, however, had an alphabet and translations, whiche stablished his hypothesis, at least, to his own satisfaction. But Mr. Stanley has ab-

solutely nothing but his cross. Now I neither wish nor mean to question the possibility, after Justinian had founded the Monastery of St. Catharine's, and monks and monkery had spread over the peninsula, that inhabitants or visitors of the monastery *may* have carved crosses upon the rocks, as symbols of their faith; this may, or may not have been the case, but it has nothing whatever to say to the pre-existing Sinaïtic Inscriptions. If such crosses exist, their recency will be at once detected by a mark which Mr. Grey has carefully noted, but which all the adversaries have studiously overlooked:— they will be found “*cut,*” and not “*dotted out.*” Mr. Stanley assures us there are numbers of them: so let it be. As for all other such like characters in the Sinai Inscriptions, I have already proved *ex abundanti* that they are the ancient Hebrew and Egyptian *t*. Beer confesses their occurrence to be very rare; but Mr. Stanley asserts that they are very numerous. Be this as it may, they are no more Christian crosses than they are *the pluses* in algebra. In fact, Mr. Stanley's printers have printed his crosses with their plus (+); and what he calls A and Ω beside them, with our common Greek capitals. I should like to see the original characters before giving any opinion. I have never given the public printed characters, but

uniformly the originals, either lithographed or glyphographed.

Mr. Stanley, I have said, has nothing to uphold his theory but his cross. For he is a total unbeliever in the recovery of the Sinaïtic alphabet or language; and, with laudable impartiality, throws overboard Beer and Tuch's alphabet and translations as well as mine: "I here briefly sum up my experience of the Sinaïtic Inscriptions, *in which, of course, I go entirely by their appearance, not by their language, of which I have no knowledge whatever.*" (p. 59.) What would poor Beer have said, what says Professor Tuch, what Chevalier Bunsen, to this uncomplimentary announcement? They are all three fairly thrown overboard. But Stanley thereby leaves himself nothing but his sign of the cross, or of the *plus*. We will now examine this sign.

To his general impression of their multitudinous numbers, I oppose the awkward and stubborn fact, that throughout between three and four hundred inscriptions which we already possess in this country, there do not occur above half a dozen of these crosses or pluses. Beer himself could find but five, and therefore (to eke out his case), adopted his *crux furcata*, **Y**. But if the three or four hundred known Inscriptions are thus destitute of crosses, who will believe

that the Christian Cross was a vital element, or an element at all, in the Inscriptions? *Credat Judæus Apelles.*

But the character thus fancifully identified with the sign of the cross, conducts us to an inquiry of far different interest and importance; for some of these alleged crosses are neither more nor less than pure and perfect forms of the Egyptian *crux ansata*, or sacred *tau*. In proof of this pregnant fact, I would refer your Lordship to the frontispiece of my "Voice of Israel," where, in Laborde's sketch of the entrance of the Wady Mokatteb, you will see two as perfect *cruces ansatæ* as are to be met with throughout the monuments of Egypt herself. Mr. Grey (No. II.) has pointed out a third example of this hieroglyphic character. And doubtless there exist many more. Chevalier Bunsen, indeed, after Beer, tells us that they are monograms for X. I., which can be mistaken for the Egyptian character "by ignorant persons" alone. Now I desire to class myself with those "ignorant persons," and affirm without reserve, that they are the Egyptian *crux ansata*, and nothing else. Here are the characters, ☩ ☪ ☫.

The occurrence of this most marked and peculiar of all the hieroglyphic characters, the *crux ansata*, at once connects the Sinaïtic Inscript-

tions themselves with Egypt: a connection completely established (as I have elsewhere shown, *Primev. Lang. Pt. I. Pl. I.*) by the absolute identity of form of many of the Sinaitic characters with those of the Enchorial Inscriptions of the Rosetta Stone, and those in the quarries of Masora. But these identifications lead to consequences and conclusions far above and beyond the fact of the phenomena; for they most clearly connect what are *called* the Egyptian monuments, in the Wâdy Mahara, and at Sarbut-el-Khadem, with the Sinaitic Inscriptions, as equally the work of the Israelites at the time of the Exode.

As the hypothesis here submitted is sure to be met by an outcry, on the part of adversaries, who so well understand the controversial uses of the *vox et præterea nihil*, I begin by apprizing your Lordship that the hypothesis is not mine; that it originates in a quarter the most unbiassed and unsuspected; that it is the judgment formed by a man of science, of severe mind, and cool and clear head. Of all the scientific travellers who have since visited the East, none, it will be allowed, surpassed in these qualities the elder Niebuhr. The theory, therefore, comes before us with an authority which must command respect, when I state that its author is CARSTEN NIEBUHR. I submit it in the words of that emi-

ment man, who thus records his own unbiassed impression, apart from all predilection, on his discovery of the great Egyptian cemetery on the summit of the mountain of Sarbut-el-Khadem :—

“ Ne seroient-ce pas ici les sépulchres de la convoitise, dont il est fait mention Nomb. xi. 34. ? — Il n'étoit point défendu aux Israélites d'employer les figures hiéroglyphiques, ni d'avoir des images d'hommes et de bêtes ; il ne leur étoit interdit que de les adorer, et même encore aujourd'hui les Juifs gravent toute sorte de figures, et même des portraits, sur des cachets.” — *Voy. en Arab.* t. i. p. 191.

In the opinion of Niebuhr, therefore, the monuments at Sarbut-el-Khadem, now called Egyptian, were an Israelite cemetery, namely, that of Kibroth Hattaavah, or “ the graves of greediness.”

Let us next hear the opinion of another scientific traveller, of equally cool judgment, and equally clear head, as to the character and authorship of these mysterious monuments. They are thus noticed and accounted for by John Lewis Burckhardt :—

“ It seems to be a custom prevalent with the Arabs, in every part of the desert, to have regular burial-grounds, whither they carry their dead, sometimes from the distance of several days’

journey. The burying-ground seen by Niebuhr, near Naszeb, which, as I have already mentioned, I passed without visiting, and missed on my way back by taking a more southern road, appears to have been an ancient cemetery of the same kind, *formed at a time when hieroglyphic characters were in use among all the nations under Egyptian influence.*—Travels in Syria, p. 482.

The last words of this passage are specially important. According to Burckhardt, the cemetery at Sarbut-el-Khadem, with its hieroglyphic monuments, was the work, *not* of Egyptians, but of some one or other of “the nations under Egyptian influence.” Now this explanation and appropriation of this seemingly Egyptian graveyard (all the more valuable because so general) obviously applies and belongs to the Israelites of the Exode, as it could not apply or belong to any other people; for they were, not only a people “under Egyptian influence,” but a people recently emerged from Egypt, and identified with the Egyptians as no other of the subject nations ever were. They were, moreover, inhabitants of this desert of Sinai for forty years, and the only Egyptian nation ever known to inhabit it. On Burckhardt’s ground, consequently, all the probabilities unite with the independent opinion of Niebuhr, in making Sarbut-

el-Khadem an Israelite burial-ground, and most probably the grave-yard of Kibroth Hattaavah.

But a most remarkable confirmation of Burckhardt's conclusion that these monuments were not by Egyptians, but by a nation "under Egyptian influence," arises in the fact, that, in place of the Egyptian symbol of *the ox*, we find uniformly substituted, in them, *the ibex* or mountain goat. This has been acutely noticed and pointed out by one of these authorities, as marking a discrepancy from the Egyptian monuments, — a discrepancy, I must observe, which again points to the Israelites beyond any other nation, because they dwelt so long in these regions of the ibex, as to make it their most natural hieroglyphic symbol. Accordingly (as Mr. Stanley has been at some pains to inform us*) the ibex is more fre-

* "So far as the drawings of animals, by which they [the Sinaitic Inscriptions] are usually accompanied, indicate the intention of the inscriptions themselves, it is difficult to conceive that that intention *could have been serious or solemn*. The animals are very rudely drawn; they are of all kinds,—asses, horses, dogs, but above all, ibexes; and these last in forms so *ridiculous*, that, making every allowance for the rudeness of the sculpture, it is *impossible to invest them with any serious signification*. The *ludicrous* exaggeration of the horns of the ibex was almost universal; and no animal occurred so frequently. Sometimes they are butting other animals. Sometimes they, as well as asses and horses, occur disconnected with the inscriptions." — *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 61.

The object of this paragraph is obviously a laugh, and to get the laugh on his side. It is in the same spirit which led himself, or one of

quently and more prominently represented in connection with the Sinaitic Inscriptions than any other animal.*

I have now the satisfaction of crowning these weighty testimonies to the Israelitish origin of the Egyptian style at Sarbut-el-Khadem, and, with them, of all the Egyptian monuments in the peninsula of Sinai, by the unqualified testimony borne by Mr. Stanley himself, to the absolute identity of Israel in Egypt with the Egyptians.

“There can be no doubt,” he most justly observes, “that during the period of the settlement in Goshen, Egypt became ‘the Holy Land;’ the Israelities, to all outward appearance, *became Egyptians*; Joseph, in his robes of white and royal ring, son-in-law of the High Priest of On, was incorporated into the reigning caste, *as truly as any of the figures whom we see in the Theban tombs.*

his *compagnons de voyage*, to “scoop out a horse,” in order to show how easily the Sinai Inscriptions were executed. Who ever said the figures were not rude? Who expected them to be otherwise? Their very rudeness indicates the workmanship of *shepherds*; and such were the Israelites of the Exode. As to the exaggerated horns of the ibex, symbolic writing depends, often, on exaggeration. The Israelites in Egypt had abundant examples of this, in the equally rude tablets of Samne or Sakkara. Ruder characters, or ruder representations of animals, are no where to be found than in Egypt. The beauty and freedom of the enchorial writing at Sinai, on the other hand, often equals, or excels, that on the Rosetta Stone.

* See the first of the Final Notes at the end of this Letter.

The sepulchres of Machpelah and Shechem received, in the remains of himself and his father, *embalmed Egyptian mummies*. The shepherds who wandered over the pastures of Goshen *were as truly Egyptian Bedouins*, as those who of old fed their flocks around the Pyramids, or who now, since the period of the Mussulman conquest, have spread through the whole country."—*Sinai and Palestine*, Introduction, p. xxviii.

Now this being the unquestionable state of things while Israel dwelt in, and when he came out of Egypt, I ask your Lordship, could any more reasonable inference be drawn than that which Niebuhr has drawn, as to the Egyptian cemetery at Sarbut-el-Khadem being the work of the Israelites? or than the further inference which necessarily follows, that all the Egyptian monuments in the Sinai peninsula were equally their workmanship?

Mr. Stanley, it is true, sees no such consequence. On the contrary, he makes Sarbut-el-Khadem the grave-yard of some supposititious Egyptian colony of miners; and gravely adduces this singular cemetery as proof of a mode of burial among the ancient Egyptians, of which he confesses no trace whatever survives in the mother country. Now of all the illusory conclusions into which he has fallen, this assuredly is

one of the most illusory. For the *one* Egyptian mode of burial by embalming, was so incorporated with their religion, as to leave no place for any other mode of burial, from the Pharaoh on his throne, to the peasant-serf in his cabin. The Sarbut-el-Khadems, therefore, which Mr. Stanley would discover in Egypt, never had or could have had existence. But I will now conduct him to the only true conclusion, by demonstrating that the counterparts of cemeteries of this fashion, only in Hebrew instead of Egyptian characters, *were* constructed by the Israelites in the Land of Promise itself; namely, graves crowned with tomb-stones, and those tomb-stones engraven with Hebrew epitaphs or inscriptions. The coincidence is so complete, and so important, that I must cite the passage :

“And as Josiah turned himself, he spied the sepulchres that were there in the mount; and sent, and took the bones out of the sepulchres, and burned them upon the altar, and polluted it, according to the word of the Lord which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these words. Then he said, what *title* is that which I see? And the men of the city told him, It is the sepulchre of the man of God, which came from Judah, and proclaimed these things which thou hast done against the altar of Bethel. And

he said, Let him alone; let no man move his bones. So they let his bones alone, with the bones of the prophet that came out of Samaria." —*2 Kings*, xxiii. 16—18.

This passage places it beyond doubt or question that the Israelites, in the Land of Promise, had burial-grounds precisely similar to the cemetery of Sarbut-el-Khadem, or Kibroth Hattaavah; with "titles," or epitaphs, on engraved headstones, only in Hebrew characters, instead of Egyptian hieroglyphics. At Kibroth Hattaavah, the multitudes simultaneously interred demonstrate, that there could have been no process of embalming; the cemetery at Sarbut-el-Khadem corresponds with this self-evident fact: no slight mark of their identity. In a word, the Israelites in the wilderness resumed (if ever they had abandoned) the patriarchal modes of sepulture; and carried them with them, from Kibroth Hattaavah, into the Promised Land.

Moses and the Egyptian Monuments in the Peninsula of Sinai.

The ante-Mosaic antiquity of the Egyptian Monuments at Sinai is not only taken for granted, but zealously contended for, by the whole ra

tionalist school who oppose, with equal zeal, the Mosaic antiquity of their companions, the Sinaitic Inscriptions. To account for the singular phenomenon of those Egyptian remains, they introduce mines * and miners, and an ideal Egyptian colony, into the Peninsula: a theory which they undertake to confirm from their own readings of the hieroglyphic tablets!

Now, without troubling your Lordship with further notice of their theory, I maintain that, instead of the presence of Egyptian monuments being any argument against the Israelitish authorship of the Sinaitic records, the *absence* of those monuments would be the strongest possible argument against their Israelitish origin. In other words, Israelitish inscriptions would naturally be accompanied by Egyptian hieroglyphic writings; nay, necessarily so, if Moses himself was the writer or dictator: inasmuch as "Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians,"

* Neither Mr. Stanley nor Dr. Lepsius can find these mines; but they think they discover traces of the smeltings. The copper they suppose to have been brought from elsewhere. Now, if these were mines, which I more than doubt, why should they not be the work of the Israelites? They must have had constant need of metal tools; and an armed nation must have had constant need of new arms. These, it is certain, were not miraculously supplied; and unless imported (which is most unlikely) must have been manufactured in the wilderness. If copper, therefore, was wrought, it was wrought by the Israelites. See the last of the Final Notes at the end of this Letter.

and was morally certain, therefore, to clothe his Egyptian wisdom in Egyptian words, i. e. in the hieroglyphics.

The presence, therefore, of those Egyptian monuments, in point of fact, doubles the proof of the Israelitish authorship of the whole of the Sinaïtic records, which are simply the two known kinds of Egyptian writing, the hieroglyphic, and the enchorial. In assigning the authorship of the two kinds, the beautifully executed Egyptian tablets may fairly be conceived to have been done by order of Moses *, while the more rudely exe-

* The name of *Moses*, occurring in more instances than one in the Greek inscriptions in the Wâdy Mokatteb, plainly indicates that Jews were among the visitors of this locality ; a circumstance, in itself, marking the continuance of the Jewish tradition as to the Mosaic origin of the inscriptions. The inscription—

ΜΥΗΣΘΗ

ΜΟΥΣΗΣ

ΣΑΜΟΥΗΛ :

may give the names only of a Jew writer. But it may mean something very different : it may be the Jew writer's reference to the great Law-giver himself ; for *Moses* and *Samuel* are so conjoined in two places of the Old Testament. Thus, Psalm xcix. 6., we read :

“ *Moses* and Aaron among his priests ;

And *Samuel* among them that call upon his name.”

And, Jeremiah, xv. 1. :

“ Though *Moses* and *Samuel* stood before me,

Yet could not my mind be towards this people.”

May not the inscription be a reference, by a pious Jew, to these texts ?

Captain Butler adds two Greek inscriptions, similarly, with names of Jews, viz. —

ΙΩΑΝΝΑ

and

ΜΟΥΣΗΣ

ΡΩΔΙΟΣ

ΥΙΟΣ ΑΡΙΣΤΟΣ.

cuted Sinaitic or enchorial writings would be the work of the ordinary Israelites, or common people. I state, simply, the probabilities, as they seem to spring from the internal evidences of the phenomena.

The common date and common authorship of *all* these inscriptions is about as plain and simple a likelihood, as could be placed before the judgment of common sense. There always, however, exists (as your Lordship is well aware) a class of minds to whom the plain and simple is distasteful; who have no pleasure in ordinary proofs, or unentangled inductions. Give these men what kind or amount of evidences you may, they are certain to demand other and more. I would now ask, therefore, what further coincidence these men require, before they will admit the common age, and common authorship, of all the unknown inscriptions at Sinai, both Egyptian and Sinaitic? Their answer, I conclude, must be: Show us a monument like the Rosetta Stone. Produce us a trilingual or bilingual tablet on which the Egyptian and Sinaitic characters are to be found *side by side*; in which, while two of the columns are in Egyptian hieroglyphics, the third column shall be in the characters called Sinaitic.

Now what I have thus put as a demand of the

most stringent *exigeance*, I am happily enabled, by an extraordinary felicity of recent discovery, to meet. For my friend, Mr. Pierce Butler, has found in a mountain cave on the Djebel Mahara a triple tablet, the very counterpart of the Rosetta Stone!

Not contenting himself with the ordinary information and ordinary phenomena, Mr. Butler, arrived in the Wâdy Mahara, cross-questioned and cross-examined his Arab guides, as to the existence of any other inscriptions besides those already known. After much and close inquiry, they at length informed him, that, in a mountain cave, half-way up the Djebel Mahara, there were writings or inscriptions of the kind he was in search of. He asked them to conduct him to the cave, and they agreed to do so. He climbed with them half-way up the side of the mountain, until he came to where they pointed out a low-browed cave. The entrance was between four and five feet high, but looked so unpromising, that he thought himself deceived, and had almost decided not to enter in. However, he wisely judged it better to try: he knelt, and entered its mouth, when, to his unfeigned astonishment, he found the entrance, on both sides, cut into regular planes or tablets, and upon the right-hand plane, discovered a triple inscription,

two of its columns being pure Egyptian hieroglyphics, the third in pure Sinaïtic characters. The three inscriptions stood *side by side* on the one tablet; all three cut, not dotted out, obviously with the same graving-tool, and by the same engraver. The Sinaïtic inscription was illustrated by the hieroglyphic figure of an ostrich, with wings dispread, neck out-stretched, and mouth open, as in the action of running and flying. The *dissecta membra* of the ostrich reappear in the Egyptian portions of the tablet, showing that there is a common subject. The ostrich in the Sinaïtic column was so spirited and life-like, as to attract Mr. Butler's special attention.

He at once took a cast, on prepared paper, of this unique monument; which, by his kindness, is now in my possession, and will appear in the next volume (Part IV.) of my work on Primeval Language. I have already proved the common age and authorship of the Egyptian and Sinaïtic records of the Peninsula, by the existence, in the latter, of the *cruz ansata*, and of the enchorial characters of Egypt. I now complete the proof, by the evidence of a monument alone sufficient to set this question at once and for ever at rest. When I consider the marks of design, and thought, and care, legible on the face of this

triple tablet, I cannot be surprized at the sudden exclamation of a friend, on first seeing it,—
 “Moses wrote it.”

The site of Rephidim, and the true Mount Sinai.

—Mr. Stanley’s “observations” are, in the next place, directed to these most interesting points of the Mosaic topography. Dr. Lepsius, as I have already stated, has settled both questions to my entire conviction, and to the full satisfaction of all his own friends, excepting Mr. Stanley. Mr. Stanley, however, while he accepts Lepsius’s site of Rephidim, by one of those hair-splitting processes by which he so often contrives to perplex his followers, and to desert his friends, makes the one sacred mountain into two; identifying Horeb, the mount of God, with Mount Serbâl, and Mount Sinai, the scene of the giving of the Law, with Gebel Mousa. I shall not task your Lordship either with the details or the refutation of this hyper-ingenious theory, but shall repeat my conviction that Dr. Lepsius has set both questions at rest for ever.

In coming to this conclusion, I am perfectly aware that very serious, and, unless removable, insurmountable difficulties, attend his verifications of these long-sought localities. To Dr. Lepsius himself, it is true, they are not difficulties, because he explains miraculous events by

natural causes. Moses, according to him, had frequented the fertile Wâdy Firan during his forty years' previous sojourn in these deserts; and the miracle at Rephidim consisted in his conducting the fainting Israelites to that vale of living waters! Mr. Stanley alludes, indeed, to his striking the rock, but seems not to doubt or question the pre-existence of the waters.

Now if there is one point more clear than another in the scriptural account of Rephidim, it is its absolute and total destitution of water. I need but refer to Exod. xvii. 1—3. in proof of this point. It is perfectly impossible, therefore, that the Wâdy Firan, in its present state, could have been the scene of the miracle, or the site of the Mosaic Rephidim, as Dr. Lepsius and all his followers maintain it to have been. The idea is too puerile, almost, for serious discussion; for, according to this theory, the Israelites already occupied this earthly paradise, and Moses, encamped on the hill of Paran, already held the key of this position, when attacked by the Amalekites. He lay, with the springs of the Wâdy Aleyât above, and the streams of the Wâdy Firan, and of el Hesue below; and the danger of the Israelites must have lain, not in the dearth, but the plethora of water. All this notwithstanding, I hold Lepsius's site to be the Mosaic

Rephidim; and difficulties apparently insurmountable, to be explicable and removable by plain warrant of Scripture.

My view and explanation of this great apparent difficulty is simply this: Rephidim, assuredly, *was* the waterless waste which the sacred narrative describes, when the Israelites arrived there; and the Wâdy Firan, with its palm groves and waters, then first sprang into being, when, by the Divine command, Moses smote the rock, and the living waters gushed out, and

"The desert smiled,
And Paradise was opened in the wild."

My belief is that this loveliest oasis of Sinai perhaps of all the East, was the CREATION of the miracle at Rephidim, and remains to this day a standing record of that great miracle. If this be so, the upper of the two springs of the Wâdy Aleyât may be the offspring of the miracle, and it appears, in Bartlett's sketch, to gush out of a rock.

But a view so new and startling as this, justly demands the strongest evidences to support it. I admit the proposition, and am prepared with those evidences. My evidences are passages in the Book of Psalms, as yet wholly unexplained; and, unless upon the grounds which

I now submit to your Lordship, altogether inexplicable. Thus in Psalm cv. 41., we read —

“ He opened the rock of stone,
And the waters flowed out :
So that rivers ran in the dry places.”

Again, in Psalm lxxviii. 15, 16.,—

“ He clave the rocks in the wilderness,
And gave them drink as out of the great depths :
He brought *streams*, also, out of the rock,
And caused the waters to run down like rivers.”

Saint Paul’s spiritual application of the miracle equally proves its historical character. “ They did all drink the same spiritual drink ; for they drank of that spiritual rock *that followed them* : and that rock was Christ.” 1 Cor. x. 4.

These texts, if they prove anything, most incontrovertibly prove, that the miracle at Rephidim was not a mere temporary relief, but a permanent and effluent supply. “ Rivers ran in the dry places.” “ The waters ran down like rivers.” Nay, they “ *followed*” the course of the Israelites, as far as that course required this miraculous supply. Compare these inspired statements with the existing phenomenon of the Wady Firan, and they become all fully explained : take away this wonderful phenomenon, and they become and must remain inexplicable.

But there remains a crowning witness to these

evidences in another scripture, the 107th Psalm. The last part of this Psalm relates exclusively to Israel in the wilderness. And here are the words of its testimony :

“ He maketh the wilderness *a standing water* :
 And *water-springs* of a dry ground.
 And there he setteth the hungry ;
That they may build them A CITY to dwell in!
That they may sow their land, and plant vineyards,
 To yield them fruits of increase.”

I pause to compare this description, with the physical characteristics, and the actual circumstances, of the Wâdy Firan. It is *the only spot* in the peninsula of Sinai, where “ the water-springs” run like ever-flowing rivers : it is *the only spot* in the peninsula of Sinai, where an ancient city, or any city, exists or ever did exist : it is *the only spot* in the peninsula of Sinai, where CORN ever was sown ; because the only spot where *corn* ever did, or ever could, grow. In a word, all the conditions depicted in the Psalm, are found in the Wâdy Firan : none of the conditions depicted in the Psalm, are to be found in any other region of that “ waste and howling wilderness.”

I resume, therefore, with the authority attaching to those who bring substantive proof in support of what had been theoretically advanced, the position from which I set out ; namely, that

the Wâdy Firan, with its corn and its palm-groves, its city and its waters, is a standing witness to the miracle at Rephidim; and a lasting memorial of the dealings of Almighty God with his people Israel.

Save from the 107th Psalm, the origin and date of the ancient city of Pharan or Paran is unknown. It is known only to be of immemorial antiquity. It could not have been built by the Israelites properly so called, because they were, one and all, bound for the Land of Promise. But why may it not have owed its origin to "the mixed multitude," who accompanied Israel out of Egypt? These had no longer a country; they had no promised Canaan, and might gladly pause and rest, dwell, and build in an oasis uniting all that the hearts of an Eastern people could desire. Once severed from the Israelites, they were sure to relapse into idolatry; the tradition of the Exode would remain, but its true character be gradually lost; until, in after times, it would be dissolved in those heathen myths, which Strabo, or Diodorus Siculus, has chronicled and handed down, to be speculated and theorised on by the visionary votaries of German "Neology," who can find everything at Sinai, but traces of God's people Israel. What I here submit to your Lordship is conjecture only; but it is conjecture

founded on the analogy of history, and on the instinctive tendency of every migratory people to colonise and settle down.

Professor Tuch and Chevalier Bunsen have bestowed abundant pains, in tracing heathen temples, and altars, and pilgrimages, in these parts; and in referring to those sources all the mysterious phenomena of the unknown Inscriptions. Their sole authorities, of course, are heathen writers, whose confused and misty narratives so often conceal sacred under profane history. In the present case, if I may express my own belief under a happy image borrowed from Mr. Stanley, "the shadow of the great Hebrew legislator would appear to have passed before them," and to have led them on to an incongruous blending of fact with fable. The learned Chevalier, for example, lays great stress upon an altar with *unknown characters* inscribed on it, mentioned by Diodorus; which he (Chevalier Bunsen) thinks (as I think, with high probability) was located in the city of Pharan. He conceives (as I think, with great justice) that this square inscribed altar may still be extant in its ruins; and earnestly recommends, and I beg most cordially to second the recommendation, that it may be sought for in the ruins by some of our travellers. Our objects, however, in de-

siring to promote this inquiry are widely different: he looks for the discovery of a heathen altar; I look for the altar erected by Moses to commemorate the victory of Rephidim. For I remember what the Chevalier seems unaccountably to have lost sight of, that "Moses built *an altar*, and called the name of it JEHOVAH-NISSI: For he said, Because the Lord hath sworn that the Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation." (*Exod. xvii. 15.*) This altar, we are agreed, was erected at Paran, the Scripture Rephidim. Here, I agree with the Chevalier, the altar of Diodorus may yet be found; but, if it be found, I venture to foretell that it will be found *inscribed with the Sinaitic characters*; and that it will prove to be nothing else than the altar of JEHOVAH-NISSI.*

* I rest my conclusion upon the internal evidences of the case. But Chevalier Bunsen, most unexpectedly, strengthens those evidences by producing a local tradition. An ancient tradition of the Mosaic origin of the altar at Pharan, it appears, existed on the spot at the beginning of the sixth century. "When St. Nilus (about 390) fled into these parts, he found Pharan a Christian town. About 120 years later [510], the monk Antoninus found there a Christian congregation, and a chapel, *the altar of which was placed on huge stones, traditionally referred to Moses.*"

His comment upon this important fact is curious, but in keeping with the whole bias of his mind. "They [the huge altar-stones traditionally ascribed to Moses, as he had just stated] very probably belonged to the pagan altar of Diodorus." The altar-stones in question, on the contrary, bear every mark of having belonged to the altar of Jehovah-nissi, naturally enough paganized by a heathen historian. Having told us,

The true Mount Sinai.—As Dr. Lepsius's identification of Sinai with Mount Serbâl has been received with equal satisfaction, by those who most agree with him, and by those who most differ from him in his general views; it might

first, after Agatharchides or Artemidorus, of the altar to Neptune, erected at the port of Neptunium, by Ariston, a general of one of the Ptolemies; Diodorus proceeds to speak of an altar of far different antiquity, as still existing at Phœnikon or Pharan: his words are most remarkable: *ἔστι δὲ καὶ βωμὸς ἐκ στερεοῦ λίθου* [in contrast, manifestly, to that of Ariston] *παλαιὸς τοῖς χρόνοις, ἐπιγραφήν ἔχων ἀρχαίοις γράμμασι ἀγνώστοις.*

I request your Lordship to pause here, and to weigh these words. Can words convey a stronger idea of *remote antiquity*, than these words convey? Could an inscription be described more perfectly agreeing with the *unknown characters* of the mysterious inscriptions at Sinai? Even Wesseling, cautious and severe critic as he was, is startled into the idea of a Mosaic origin of this altar: “*nisi si de Hebræis suspicari quis velit, quod quidem ego vix ausim.*” This is the language of secret semi-conviction; he wanted moral courage, only, to speak it more fully out.

As the characters on this altar were unknown in the times of the Ptolemies, is it not the just inference that the neighbouring Sinaiic Inscriptions were then equally unknown? and is it not, further, only natural to infer, that they are, one and all, of the same family, the same origin, the same authorship? Different families of alike unknown inscriptions in the same localities, is an assumption which I leave with the lovers of paradox to take up and defend.

But Diodorus's primeval altar completely knocks on the head Professor Tuch's reference of the Sinai inscriptions, to pilgrims visiting the Neptunian altar of Ariston (if this be his hypothesis); for that altar was a recent and occasional erection, merely to invoke prosperity on his voyage of discovery. The reverence, on the other hand, mentioned by Diodorus, as paid by the surrounding wild Arab tribes to the altar and groves at Pharan, would be but a natural consequence of the traditional impression made and left, by the miracles of the Exode, and the terrors at the giving of the Law.

be supposed that Mr. Stanley would have been drawn into the current of so unusual a confluence of opinions. Instead, however, of this being so, he seems as unsettled about the question of the true Mount Sinai, as about most other questions. Always intent upon his favourite object of discovering natural explanations of miraculous events, he places himself, here, under other guidance.

Mysterious Sounds and Noises.—Speaking of “the mysterious noises which have, from time to time, been heard on the summit of Gebel Mousa, in the neighbourhood of Um-Shûmer and in the mountain of Nahûs,” he thus proceeds to discuss the probable or possible connection between these natural phenomena, and the thunderings, and voices, and terrors on Mount Sinai at the giving of the Law: “On the other hand, the mysterious sounds which have been mentioned on Um-Shûmer and Gebel Mousa, *may be in some way connected with the terrors described in the Mosaic narrative.* [!] *If they are,* they furnish an additional illustration, not to say an additional proof, of the historical truth of the narrative. If they are not, it must rest, as heretofore, on its own internal evidence.”—*Sin. and Pal.* pp. 15. 23.

I state the simple fact that, when I first read

this last passage I could scarcely trust my own eyes. “Mysterious sounds on Gebel Mousa and Um-Shûmer in some way connected with the terrors described in the Mosaic narrative”! As well (if we *must* compare the finite with the infinite) compare the earth-shaking thunders of the last bombardment and fall of Sebastopol, with their mimic echoes in the Surrey Gardens. “Mysterious sounds on Um-Shûmer or Gebel Mousa may in some way be connected with the terrors described in the Mosaic narrative;” in other words, may in a natural way explain the scene where Nature shook to her inmost foundations at the descent and presence of Nature’s GOD!*

To place such doctrine in its only true light there is but the one way—to confront it with the text of Scripture. Here is that sacred text, face to face with Mr. Stanley’s version :

Exodus, xix. 17—20.† *Rev. A. P. Stanley,*

“And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp, to meet with God; “On the other hand,

* So it was at the Crucifixion : “And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom : and the earth did quake : and the rocks rent : and the graves were opened.” In a word, without any natural cause, all nature was convulsed,

† Compare Deuteronomy, iv. 11.

and they stood at the ne-
ther part of the mount.

And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire; and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, AND THE WHOLE MOUNTAIN QUAKED GREATLY.

And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice.

And the Lord came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mount."

the mysterious sounds which have been mentioned, on Um-Shûmer and Gebel Mousa, may be in some way connected with the terrors described in the Mosaic narrative.

If they are, they furnish an additional illustration, not to say an additional proof, of the historical truth of the narrative.

If they are not, it must rest, as heretofore, upon its own internal evidence."

If this comparison and contrast does not shock Mr. Stanley's religious sense, it does shock mine, and must and will shock the religious sense of all who, with me, receive the Scripture miracles in their plain, literal, and unsophisticated meanings*; who neither accompany Dr. Lepsius in

* How comes it that blots like these, in an otherwise very interesting and pleasing book of travels, have been let pass unnoted, not merely by "The Times," or "The Illustrated News," but by the professed guardians of "sound doctrine?" It cannot be from nescience. Can it be from an

quest of Tarfa trees, to explain the miracle of the Manna; nor follow Dr. Robertson in search of winds and tides, to account by natural causes for the miraculous passage of the Red Sea; nor attend Mr. Stanley in his pursuit of "mysterious sounds and noises" on the mountains' tops, to solve the soul-withering phenomena which are thus described by Saint Paul in Hebrews:

"For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched,
and that burned with fire,
nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest,
and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words;
which voice, they that heard intreated that the word should not be
spoken to them any more:
for they could not endure that which was commanded:—
And so terrible was the sight that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and
quake."—*Heb.* xii. 18—21.

Now, if the Scriptural account of these miraculous physical phenomena contains any marks available for our guidance, in the ascertainment of the true Mount Sinai, it is perfectly clear that traces of those marks ought to be discernible on the face of that holy mountain. Thus, if, as

unwise caution? The thought is suggested by the prophetic words of the late Bishop Jebb, in the last year of his exemplary life: "Mr. Forster, the unworthy caution of the Church of England, has been her bane, and will one day be her ruin." May his warning voice prove the means of averting what it foretells, by calling forth the sons of the Church of England to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the Saints."

Moses tells us, "the whole mount did quake greatly;" if the shock as of an earthquake rocked it, literally, to its foundations; if "the earth did quake, and the rocks rent," as we all know and believe they did at the time of the Crucifixion; it is most clear that we must look for marks of this wreck of nature, in any mountain of the Peninsula claiming to be Mount Sinai. Now, the very marks described and required in order to the verification, *are* to be found at Mount Serbâl, and are not, it appears, to be found on any other of the reputed Mount Sinais. For the Wâdy Aleyât, on its northern face, is, as already noticed, one vast chaos of ruins, — of rocks precipitated from the face of the perpendicular mountain above by some great convulsion of nature. The face of the perpendicular summit, 2000 feet in height, has been torn open, and the only practicable ascent (as Mr. Pierce Butler ascertained), is up the chasms made by the fallen rocks below. There are no signs, Mr. Stanley allows, of volcanic agency. The shock, therefore, which thus shook the mountain, resembled, rather, that of an earthquake. Now compare these physical facts and features with what took place at the giving of the Law, "And the Lord (we read) came down upon Mount Sinai, ON THE TOP OF THE MOUNT." Can words describe more graphically the pre-

cipitous summit of the Serbâl? Can facts attest more literally the awful sequel, than do the rifted precipice, here, beneath the feet of Jehovah, and the rent rocks of the Wâdy Aleyât in chaotic confusion below it? If, therefore, Sinai is still recoverable by its scriptural signs, MOUNT SERBÂL IS THE TRUE MOUNT SINAI.

Etymology of the name Ser-bâl.— Many theories have been broached as to the true etymon of this name; all, alike, pointing to a heathen origin. Now, if it can be shown to come from the Arabic, and that, in the Arabic, it may be rendered “The Mount of God,” we obtain a conclusive mark of its identity with Mount Horeb or Sinai. صارة *Sar-aton*, from the Arabic root صار, *Sara*, signifies *Jugum montis*, and בעל, or בעל, denotes, not only the Phœnician *Baal*, but, primarily and in its proper sense, both in Hebrew and Arabic, *Dominus*, *Lord*. In this, its primary sense, it is applied to himself by Jehovah: thus we read in the prophet Hosea (ii. 16.):

“And it shall be, at that day, saith the Lord,
that thou shalt call me *ISHI* (*my husband*);
and shalt call me no more *BALI* (*my Lord*).”

Jehovah, it follows, originally was addressed by the name or title of Baal; and the Arabs retained the denomination. *Serbâl*, thus derived,

means literally, "THE MOUNT OF GOD," *i. e.* SINAI.

The identification of Mount Serbâl with Mount Sinai, I would now observe, completely solves the otherwise inexplicable phenomenon of the innumerable Sinaïtic Inscriptions which literally clothe its northern side. For the Israelite shepherds, with their flocks and herds, were sure to frequent the fruitful and well-watered oasis of Wâdy Firan, during the forty years following the giving of the Law; and *they*, and *they alone*, had ample leisure and endless opportunities to inscribe upon the fallen rocks of the Wady Aleyât their short and simple records of the wonders and miracles of the Exode.

I should pass over without remark Mr. Stanley's essay to identify Kadesh Barnea with Petra, were it not for the occasion it presents of showing on what slight foundations those most apt to call in question the theories of others, are content to rest their own. From the occurrence of a few Sinaïtic characters on the steps of the Deir, at Petra, our author draws, at once, the inference that Petra must have been one of the chief Keblas, or points of devotional resort, for his Christian pilgrims. Some characters like crosses within the Deir, confirm him in this belief. He becomes almost romantic on it. The tomb of

Aaron, on the opposite Mount Hor, was the magnet of this pilgrimage: the pilgrims, ascending the platform of the Deir, devoutly contemplated the mausoleum above. And all this vision grounded upon the occurrence of a few letters and crosses! But how happens it that he left behind him, unseen, the really curious and elaborate *Nabathean* inscriptions, in characters resembling the *Sinaitic*, which exist at Petra? To one of these (that in the w. om Amdam), I had specially invited attention, by publishing its alphabet in my *Harmony*: it is the inscription in five long lines, discovered by Messrs. Irby and Mangles, and, at length, recovered by the enterprise of a relative of my friend, Mr. Vice-Chancellor Wood. Now this inscription is in total contrast to the rudeness of the *Sinaitic*: for it is engraved deeply and symmetrically upon a tablet cut in alto-relievo in the face of the rock, in the form of a parallelogram, terminating in ornamental triangular wings, like some of the *Lycian* tablets brought home, I think, by Sir Charles Fellows. Here was something really worth seeing, but Mr. Stanley and his fellow-travellers saw it not. Yet it completely explains his pilgrim-characters on the steps of the Deir: they are the scratchings of the idle *Nabathean* workmen when disengaged from more serious employment.

I am indebted to the kindness of Mr. Ross of Bladensburg (younger son of the lamented General Ross) for two new specimens of Nabathean monumental art. They are both from tombs, or rather from the same tomb; both are carved, in the same Nabathean characters, upon or under elaborately-wrought rock-tablets. They settle the question of the Nabathean characters and language; but they dispose at the same time, *in toto*, of Mr. Stanley's Christian pilgrims. The wonder is that there are any inscribed monuments, where there are so few.

But the identification of Petra with Kadesh-Barnea is disposed of, independently, by a single text of Scripture. In Numb. xxxiii. 36, 37., we read, "And they [the Israelites] removed from Ezion-gaber, and pitched in the wilderness of Zin, which is Kadesh. And *they removed from Kadesh*, and *pitched in mount Hor*, in the edge of the land of Edom." Now, here we have a decampment, a journey, and a fresh encampment, interposed between Kadesh-Barnea and Mount Hor. But how stands Petra with reference to Mount Hor? it is at its foot: it is within two or three miles of its summit. As well might we speak of a journey from Keswick to Skiddaw. Leaving this hypothesis to be settled by these

facts, I adopt, unhesitatingly, the KADESH of my friend Mr. Rowlands.

We have at length arrived at "almost the only conclusion in my work which derived any confirmation from Mr. Stanley's observations."

HAZEROTH, *now* HUDERA, and the *Miracle of the Feathered Fowls.*

From the bearings of the site, and the identity of the radicals, Burckhardt most justly identified the Hazeroth of Scripture, with the modern Hudera, and its fountain of El-Ayn. Mr. Stanley, however, as usual, questions the identification. But of this more, presently. My concern is with the miracle at Kibroth Hattaavah, and with my published explanation of it. That explanation had met an acceptance and favour, if not beyond its critical importance as clearing up one of the most difficult texts in the Bible, certainly beyond my expectation.

From the application of my previously formed Sinaïtic alphabet*, to no less than four distinct

* Chevalier Bunsen criticizes with misplaced severity my adoption, in this alphabet, of Hebrew powers for its Hebrew forms. His criticism

examples of the same inscription, I was conducted to the discovery, that the birds intended by the Hebrew generic term *Salu*, were not quails, but a reddish bird resembling a goose. The name in the inscription was *نهام*, *Nuham*; its definition, “nomen avis rubræ, quæ formâ anserem refert.” The characters which yielded this result were, all three, of known forms and powers. The clear and full light which the word, thus rendered, shed upon a text which had defied all the powers of criticism, from

recoils upon his own friends; inasmuch as Professors Beer and Tuch have, very justly, done precisely the same thing. They have given the same powers which I have given to the few Hebrew characters in the Inscriptions. And these, I must add, are the only sound letters of their alphabet. There are six or seven of them. But when Beer, and Tuch after him, make *vau*, out of the Greek or Phœnician *Ϝ*, *tsaddi*, out of the *Ϥ*, *koph*, and *aleph*, out of the inverted Arabic final *ع*, viz. 6, they proceed without chart or compass on an unknown sea, and at once make shipwreck of the whole. I may take this opportunity of noticing one statement of the learned Chevalier, which calls for a public correction. He has done me the favour to express his “hope that I have abandoned” my original discovery at Hisn Ghorâb. The wish, I apprehend, is father to the hope; and both are doomed to be disappointed. But to publish such a misstatement in the face of my “Harmony of Alphabets,” of which the Hisn Ghorâb alphabet is the sole key, and of my statement of this fact in my Letter of Dedication, is a proceeding which I leave to the learned author to justify to a fair and impartial public. I shall further take this opportunity of announcing, that the monuments of Southern Arabia (including Hisn Ghorâb, and new and decisive confirmation of the Patriarchal antiquity of its great ten-line inscription) will form the subject of Part IV. of “The One Primeval Language.”

Josephus to Bishop Patrick, at once recommended this decypherment to all impartial judgments; and, so far at least, established my alphabet.

Besides this alphabet, I had no guide whatever to the discovery; and had not the most distant idea of its ever receiving collateral confirmation. Had it been in my power to choose, the collateral light which, beyond all other conceivable illustrations, I must have chosen, would have been, of course, the discovery of the birds described by the name *Nuham*, in the direction of the Gulf of Akaba, whence came "the feathered fowls" of the miracle. In Egypt I *had* found them on the mountains (see "Voice of Israel," p. 101.), but never dreamt of finding them in the waste and howling waters east of the Sinai Peninsula.

It was, therefore, with indescribable astonishment that I read, in Mr. Stanley's still unpublished Journal (kindly communicated to me by family friends), the account of his seeing innumerable flocks of these very *Nuham*s, evening and morning, passing over his encampment at Andera, from the gulf of Akaba, on the wing, across the Sinai Peninsula, to Egypt. The phenomenon seemed almost too wonderful to realise.

I now submit to your Lordship Mr. Stanley's

view of a discovery, which alone overpays all the toils and labours of his pilgrimage to Sinai.

“HAZEROTH.

“Besides the interest of the physical peculiarities of this route, is *the faint probability* that this beautiful valley and its neighbourhood *may* have been the scene of the first long halt after the departure from Sinai. After Taberah and Kibroth-Hattaavah, the people ‘*abode*’ for seven days, at least, in HAZEROTH. Burckhardt, and most travellers after him, have, from the resemblance of the two radical letters in the two words, identified this with *Huderáh*. Such a conjecture *must be very uncertain*, the more so, as the name of Hazeroth is one the least likely to be attached to any permanent or natural feature of the Desert. It means simply the ‘enclosures,’ such as may still be seen in the Bedouin villages, hardly less transitory than tents. Three points, however, may be mentioned, *as slightly confirmatory of the hypothesis that the Israelite route lay in these valleys*. First, the brook of El'-Ain, as its name implies, is emphatically ‘*the water,*’ ‘*the spring,*’ of this region of the Desert, and *must*, therefore, have attracted round it any nomadic settlements, and such as that of Israel must have been. *If* they descended at all to the western shores of the Gulf of 'Akaba, *this is the most natural spot for them to have selected for a long halt*. Secondly, in the murmurs ^{pre}vious to their arrival at Hazeroth, ‘the sea’ is twice mentioned*, in a manner

* Numb. xi. 22. 31.

which *may* indicate its proximity, and which is, therefore, *certainly* more appropriate to these valleys touching on the Gulf of 'Akaba, than to the more inland route over the Tih. 'Shall the flocks and the herds be slain for them, to suffice them? or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together, to suffice them?' 'There went forth a wind from the Lord, and brought quails from the sea.' Thirdly, in connection with this incident of 'the quails,' may be mentioned the fact, that, on the evening and the morning of our encampment, immediately before reaching the Wâdy Huderâh, *the sky was literally darkened by the flight of innumerable birds*, which proved to be the same large red-legged cranes, *three feet high*, with black and white wings, measuring seven feet from tip to tip, which we had seen, in like numbers, at the First Cataract of the Nile. *It is remarkable that a similar flight was seen by Schubert near the very same spot.* That any large flight of birds should be seen in those parts, at any rate *illustrates* the Scripture narrative. But, *if a recent explanation of the difficult passage in Numbers xi. 31. be correct*, and the expression 'two cubits high upon the face of the earth,' be applied, not to the accumulation of the mass, but to the size of the individual birds, the flight of cranes, such as we saw, *may be*, not merely an illustration, BUT AN INSTANCE, of the incident recorded in the Pentateuch and the frequency of the phenomenon in this locality *may serve to shew that Kibroth-Hattaavah and Huderâh were not far distant.*"—*Sin. and Pal.*, pp. 81-83.

Upon this "doubtful solution of doubtful

doubts," I observe, that it is a diluted and watered-down re-concoction of Mr. Stanley's original Journal. In that Journal, written under the immediate first impressions of the astounding phenomenon he had just witnessed, he speaks warmly of it as a fact "which will delight Mr. Forster,"—as "a curious coincidence with his view,"—and as a discovery which "makes his [Mr. Forster's] explanation of the 'two cubits' *extremely probable*." He adds, that Schubert saw similar flights nearly on the same spot, which, according to the usual theory, "*must be close to Kibroth-Hattaavah*." He mentions, last, what is omitted in the published account, the all-important fact, that he and his fellows had eaten one of these birds, upon the Nile, "and had found it *very good food*." In a discovery so important, in the case of so difficult a point of Scripture, nothing tending to elucidate the difficulty should be kept back. I call upon Mr. Stanley, therefore, either himself to publish this passage of his Journal, or to permit me to publish it. The *πρῶται* are often better than the *δευτέραι φρονιίδες*.

In the note on the above quotation, which has given birth to this Letter, Mr. Stanley is pleased to express himself "unwilling to withhold this slight illustration." For its non-suppression, I can acknowledge no obligation. Can he, for a

moment, forget that he was *bound* to make known his discovery? that to suppress so great a discovery, one likely to throw the most precious light on the Scriptures of truth, would be a wrong done to truth, to reason, to religion,—a wrong he was wholly incapable of doing? Why, then, resort to the petty artifice of controversy, which would diminish even his own achievement, in order to depreciate whatever came from the quarter to which he was opposed?

As to my decyphering of the words of the inscription, *nuham bahari*, “nuhams from the sea,” which, at once, thus clearly explains an otherwise inexplicable text, and tallies so perfectly with the flights of red cranes seen by Mr. Stanley on the scene of the miracle, either it is a chance double coincidence of the most unprecedented kind, or it is a real verification: if the former, Mr. Stanley wastes words in noticing it at all; if the latter, he admits my alphabet, it is the true one so far, and all consistent scepticism is at an end.

But there is a further correspondence between Mr. Stanley’s account of the flights of geese-like cranes, and the Scriptural account of the miracle of “the feathered fowls,” showing the identity of these phenomena in a still more conclusive way: lies in the coincident direction of their flight.

In the 78th Psalm, we have the following account of its direction :—

“ He caused the *east wind* to blow under heaven :
 And, through his power, he brought in the *south-west wind*.
 He rained flesh upon them as dust :
 And feathered fowls like the sand of the sea.”

Now the joint action of these two winds would manifestly carry these flights in the diagonal, from Akaba across the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt : a direction which exactly tallies with that of the flights observed by Mr. Stanley and his fellow-travellers, and with the fact of their periodical migrations to the banks of the Nile. Nay, the direction of their flight marks the true sites both of Hazeroth and Kibroth-Hattaavah ; which we may, alone, hence safely conclude to be the same with Hudera and Sarbut-el-Khadem, the two adjoining stations in that direction. But Mr. Stanley's discovery seems to point to a *natural* cause of the miracle ; and I suspect this tended to recommend it to his special favour. Upon this point, however, I would only observe that natural causes miraculously ordered and overruled, are, equally with supernatural, acts of Almighty will and Almighty power. Thus, when our Lord compelled the fishes to crowd into the net, he exercised the same Divine will and power as

when he called unto the dead man, "Lazarus come forth."

But our path of duty is plain: we have no title to look for natural causes in miracles, except so far as Scripture has clearly revealed them. The miracle of "the feathered fowls" is described in Psalm lxxviii. as of this class, and appears to have consisted in so directing and timing their flight, as to coincide with the course and wants of the Israelites, and in causing them to settle down (like those in Picardy noticed in my work) in and around the camp of the Hebrews. Those which Mr. Stanley saw, all flew past.

If apology be due for occupying your Lordship's invaluable time, and the public attention, with so full an *exposé* of the incorrectness of Mr. Stanley's "observations," my apology will be found in the circumstance, that Mr. Stanley is not only an elegant scholar, and a writer of great popularity, but an influential member, moreover, of a confederacy of literary dictators, who seem to have taken for their motto a maxim ascribed to Chevalier Bunsen, that "What so many learned men over Europe have agreed in cannot now be disturbed." Had this precious maxim been the rule in former days, what would have become of the Baconian and Newtonian systems of philosophy? But it seems now in

fashion. It is understood that even "The Quarterly," and "The Edinburgh," are bespoke; and that their editors make no secret of it, that "they must swim with the tide." Be it so: truth can dispense with their alliance; and if the experimental system of philology which I advocate, be the only true system, it will eventually overcome all opposition; for, **MAGNA EST VERITAS, ET PRÆVALEBIT.**

Before taking leave, I cannot but pause to compare the state in which I found the question at issue, with the space which it now occupies in the public mind. In 1844, when the Sinai Inscriptions of Mr. Grey first came into my hands, the subject had been "pottered and twaddled over" by a few learned German professors, or coldly glanced at by one or another of our rare English Orientalists. Professor Beer was the only acknowledged authority; and his decyphers were so absolutely insignificant, as to remind his few readers only of their misspent time. How does the question stand now? From the moment that the relation of Cosmas Indicopleustes was done common justice to, all became changed. All orders, all classes, all creeds of the British community, became deeply and intensely interested in the subject. Lectures upon it were delivered by learned and by able men,

from the pulpit, from the chairs of "Philosophical Societies," and of "Young Men's Institutes." In a word, a universal interest arose, once the idea spread abroad that the subject was a Scriptural one, that is, one connected with Scripture.

The interest thus awakened at home, soon spread to the Continent. *Savans* of Paris took enlightened views of the subject in published articles, in the "Journal Asiatique," and in other French journals; and the Gallican Church, so famed in former days for its love of letters, embraced the inquiry with Christian zeal, as one of real importance in the evidences of the faith. Public interest, meanwhile, grew in England, until it reached the highest quarters in Church and State. And a memorial, subscribed by the venerable primates of the United Church, and by some of the first names in this country, was presented by your Lordship to the Prime Minister, in order to secure the services at Sinai of an accredited agent of the British Government. The results of the late Captain Butler's mission are given or indicated in this letter. The researches of the Messrs. Butler have been since followed up by the enterprize of one of our first men of science, the Rev. John Craig, M.A., who proceeded to Sinai last year, with an apparatus of his own invention, capable of taking the in-

scriptions in photograph, at all heights and distances. And the latest information we possess announces an expedition to the Sinai Peninsula emanating from the Scotch Free Kirk*; which has raised funds and formed a commission of five-and-twenty gentlemen, believed, at the moment in which I write, to be engaged at Sinai in taking fac-similes of all its inscriptions. Such has been the transition, on the first serious idea of their Israelitish origin, from that obscurity into which Mr. Stanley and Chevalier Bunsen are now vainly endeavouring to replunge them.

I would read, before I conclude, a parting admonition to the school to which these gentlemen belong, not in my own words, but in those of an able writer in "The Christian Observer," in which he closes his review of "The Voice of Israel from the Rocks of Sinai."

"There are many other inscriptions translated by Mr. Forster; but those above given are some of the most important. It is difficult to believe

* As, besides Mr. Pierce Butler's discovery of the triple inscription in a cave on the Djebel Mahara, a second hieroglyphic inscription was discovered by Captain Butler, in four compartments, round a square column supporting the roof of an excavated cavern, in the neighbourhood of Djebel Nahûs, it is specially recommended that all the caves in these localities, whether natural or artificial, shall be carefully examined for inscriptions. Caverns, it is clear, have been especially selected by the authors of those inscriptions.

that such a result is only a happy accident. The hieroglyphics, the animals, all correspond with the proposed translations of the inscriptions. Why then should we doubt that they are really the work of the Israelites in the desert? Does it not seem to be the most natural solution of the difficulty? At any rate, we are surely authorized to say to those who deny the truth of Mr. Forster's theory, who allege that the inscriptions will ultimately be discovered to be nothing but 'Abdallah the son of Abdallah,' and the like, 'Bring forward your counter-proofs. We do not rest upon assertion. We reveal the process by which we aver that we have arrived at this result; do the same, and your arguments shall be fairly considered: our only wish is, that truth should be finally victorious.' Until this is done, we may fairly consider the Sinaitic Inscriptions to be 'the contemporary records of Israel in the wilderness.' Indeed, we cannot fail to see in this the hand of God. At a time when such doubts are thrown upon the whole of the Mosaic records; when they are described as a collection of 'myths;' what testimony more valuable to the exact veracity of the Mosaic history than that which these inscriptions afford? Unconscious witnesses to the truth of God's Word; a hidden testimony lying unnoticed for

ages, but 'graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever,' but now produced to strengthen the hands of those who believe 'all Scripture to have been written by inspiration of God,' and therefore to be unalterably true in the minutest particular. Brought to light, as they have been, by indefatigable research, they will occupy a post in the front rank to oppose the torrent of modern scepticism. Thank God that we have many still who do not need such proofs!—many who believe God's Word as it stands alone and unsupported; many who believe that apparent contrarieties and difficulties will one day be explained. But all have not this happy frame of mind. For such as these, God supplies proof: their faith, though weak, He confirms; their doubts, unreasonable though they are, He dispels; He treats them as He did the unbelieving Thomas; He leads them on till they too are constrained to cry out, 'My Lord, and my God.'—'O Lord, Thy Word endureth for ever. . . . Thy truth also remaineth from one generation to another.'—'All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away; but the Word of the Lord endureth for ever.'"

I now leave it with your Lordship and the

British public to decide, whether Mr. Stanley's case has not broken down; whether his facts have not failed him; whether the errors are not to be found, not in my "Conclusions," but in his own "OBSERVATIONS."

I have the honour to remain,
My dear Lord,
Your obliged and faithful servant,
CHARLES FORSTER.

5. Breed's Place, Hastings,
April 21. 1856.

The Right Hon. The Lord LYNDHURST.

*F

FINAL NOTES.

Cemetery of Sarbut-el-Khadem (pp. 51-54.).—The non-appearance of the ox, the idolatrous symbol of Apis, and the substitution of the local symbol of the Desert, the ibex or mountain goat, in its stead, on these hieroglyphic stelæ, is *conclusive* against their Egyptian origin, and one of the strongest conceivable marks of their being Mosaic. When we recall to mind the then recent worship of the golden calf, these internal marks assume the utmost force.

The copper-works, if any, at Wādy Maḥara and Sarbut-el-Khadem, works of the Israelites.—I have shown (p. 58.) the high probability of this inference. I will now show that the antecedent probability is sustained by a text, which proves that the manufacture of copper was one of the tasks imposed on Israel in Egypt.

Psalm lxxx. 6. we read,—“And his hands were delivered from making the *pots*.” That these pots were *copper vessels*, will now appear from the definitions of the Hebrew word for *pot*, viz. דָּוּד, *dūd*. “דָּוּד, *Olla*; *Syriac Olla magna, Ahenum.*” — Gesenius.

What more natural than for the Israelites to resume, for their own uses, the art they had learnt in Egypt?

POSTSCRIPT.

The Cultivation of Corn in the Wâdy Firan (pp. 67, 68).—The preceding pages had been worked off, when a friend, to whom I showed them, remarked that the growth of corn in the Wâdy Firan served to explain a difficulty which had occurred to him respecting the source whence the Israelites obtained a supply of corn for the “fine flour” used in their sacrifices, in compliance with the injunctions of the Law. From numerous passages in the Pentateuch, it is clear, that the Chosen People, throughout all their wanderings in the wilderness, after the delivery of the Law, possessed the means of obeying those injunctions. Now the limited supply of corn obtained from a single fertile spot, such as the Wâdy Firan, though insufficient to feed the entire multitude, would have been ample for the purpose above-mentioned, even after affording to some extent the luxury of bread to those who raised it, and perhaps to a few others. The remark appears to me too important to be omitted. I would here simply add, that its accuracy is confirmed by proofs derived from the received Biblical chronology; according to which the miracle at Rephidim, causing the first fertilization of the valley, took place B.C. 1491 (Exod. xvii. 1—7.). The Divine injunction relating to the sacrificial offerings, was not delivered till the following year (Lev. ii.

1. 4.; Numb. vi. 15.); after which the princes of the twelve tribes made their offerings, all including "fine flour," the first of the kind that occur; ample time having elapsed in the interval for raising the required supply. After this period, but not before it, there is frequent mention of similar offerings.

ERRATA.

- Page 54. line 6. *for style read stele.*
 79. line 15. *for Mr. read the.*
 7. *from bottom, for Fellows read Fellowes.*
 83. line 15. *for mountains read monuments.*
 5. *from bottom, for Andera read Hudera.*
-

THE END.

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X



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