

Publications of the Princeton University Archaeological
Expeditions to Syria in 1904—1905 and 1909

DIVISION II

ANCIENT ARCHITECTURE IN SYRIA

BY

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SECTION A

SOUTHERN SYRIA

PART 7

THE LEDJĀ.

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Abbreviations of Periodicals and Publications Frequently Mentioned.

- A. E. or A. E. S. *Publications of an American Archaeological Expedition to Syria in 1899—1900*, I, II, III, IV.
- A. J. A. *American Journal of Archaeology*.
- Ann. Ép. *L'Année Épigraphique*.
- B. C. H. *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique*.
- C. I. G. *Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum*.
- C. I. L. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*.
- C. I. S. *Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum*.
- É. A. O. Clermont-Ganneau; *Études d'Archéologie Orientale*.
- Ephem. Lidzbarski; *Ephemeris für semitische Epigraphik*.
- G. G. A. *Göttingische Gelehrte Anzeigen*.
- H. *Hermes*.
- I. G. R. *Inscriptiones Graecae ad Res Romanas pertinentes*.
- I. S. O. G. Dittenberger; *Orientalis Graeci Inscriptiones Selectae*.
- J. A. *Journal Asiatique*.
- J. K. D. A. I. *Jahrbuch des Kaiserlich Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts*.
- J. K. P. K. *Jahrbuch der Königlich Preussischen Kunstsammlungen*.
- K. A. Strzygowski; *Klein-Asien, ein Neuland der Kunstgeschichte*.
- M. A. A. Jaussen et Savignac; *Mission Archéologique en Arabie*, I.
- M. N. D. P.-V. *Mitteilungen und Nachrichten des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins*.
- M. S. M. Dussaud et Macler; *Mission dans les régions désertiques de la Syrie moyenne*.
- N. E. Lidzbarski; *Handbuch der nordsemitischen Epigraphik*.
- P. A. Brünnow; *Die Provincia Arabia*.
- P. E. *Princeton Expeditions*.
- P. E. F. *Quarterly Statement of the Palestine Exploration Fund*.
- P. M. Guy le Strange; *Palestine under the Moslems*.
- P. R. G. S. *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*.
- P. W. Pauly-Wissowa; *Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*.
- R. A. *Revue Archéologique*.
- R. A. O. Clermont-Ganneau; *Recueil d'Archéologie Orientale*.
- R. B. *Revue Biblique*.
- Rép. *Répertoire d'épigraphie sémitique*.
- S. C. Marquis de Vogüé; *La Syrie Centrale, Architecture Civile et Religieuse*.
- S. E. P. Conder; *Survey of Eastern Palestine*.
- V. A. S. Dussaud; *Voyage Archéologique au Şafâ*.
- Z. G. E. *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde zu Berlin*.
- Z. D. M. G. *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*.
- Z. D. P.-V. *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins*.

PARTS.

1. AMMONITIS.
 2. SOUTHERN ḤAURÂN.
 3. UMM IDJ-DJIMÂL.
 4. BOŞRÂ ESKI SHÂM (*BOSTRA*).
 5. ḤAURÂN PLAIN AND DJEBEL ḤAURÂN.
 6. SÎ (*SEEIA*).
 7. THE LEDJÂ (*TRACHONITIS*).
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THE LEDJĀ.

INTRODUCTION.

The Country.

The Ledjā, as is well known, is the great field of lava which was emitted from the now extinct craters of the Djebel Ḥaurân, and spreads out in a great trapezoid over the plain to the north and northwest of those mountains. This trapezoidal, lava-covered, tract lies with its short side toward the north, it is about 30 miles long and 20 miles wide at its greatest width. Its eastern and western boundaries are almost straight; but its southern end is unevenly indented by the foothills of the Djebel Ḥaurân. From a geological point of view the Ledjā is probably unique as a place of human habitation. It is almost inaccessible from without and extremely difficult to traverse within. When viewed from the mountains on the south it appears like a glacier in basalt, a wild, confused, tossing, sea of black, metallic-looking ice, with mighty broken-crested waves, swirls and eddies, and deep cavernous hollows, intersected by dark ragged-edged crevasses, and with here and there a patch of bright green foam, floating on the troubled sea. It seems a boiling, writhing mass, agitated from below, all frozen and stiffened in an instant, as if by magic. One does not realize at first that this raging sea is not in motion, for every line of the twisting currents denotes active force of the most violent sort, and one almost expects to hear those groaning, crunching, sounds that are given out by grinding masses of ice set in violent motion by angry waters. A more forbidding and desolate place for planting the homes of civilized men can not well be imagined; yet the Ledjā has been inhabited probably from the earliest periods of Syrian history, as its most ancient monuments show, by peoples in no way inferior in culture to their neighbours of the surrounding fertile plain, and it is even now the seat of Druse villages which are quite as well built as the villages of the mountains hard by, and quite equal to them as places of residence.

A nearer view of this waste of lava is hardly more inviting or less inhospitable. The edge of the entire area is abruptly marked off from the smooth reddish surface of the comparatively level plain which surrounds it on three sides by a rim (luḥf as it is called in Arabic) of jagged basalt which forms a wall about ten metres high, and almost impenetrable. The traveller may ride for miles along this rugged natural defense without discovering an entrance or a point where even the most sure-footed Arab horse could

be trusted to climb. A dweller from within is the only sure guide to a place of entry and the only safe path-finder when once the rim has been passed. The openings in the rude natural fortifications are few, and almost all of them will be found to have been cut or broken through by the ancients. The roads from point to point within were all of them laid out by the original inhabitants, or at least by very early settlers, and were in part actually built over the more difficult routes. In Roman days two straight roads were constructed across the lava waste; of these I shall speak later; but ordinarily the paths follow the lines of least resistance, and often, in order to reach a point in plain view a mile or less away, one must be guided over a devious course two or three miles long.

I estimate that the more nearly level stretches of the Ledjā are from seven to ten metres higher than the general level of the country around about; but the traveller is seldom conscious of being in a level spot, and his outlook is usually shut in by high waves of cracked and broken basalt that rise from five to seven metres above his head. In order to secure an extended view he must climb over the rough rocks and crevasses to the crest of some basalt wave, and then he will see only the crests of other waves for miles around, and the peaks of the Ḥaurān mountains or the snow-capped crest of Mt. Hermon in the dim distance. The prospect is in any case uncompromisingly wild and desolate. Wierd and strange phenomena of volcanic action are in evidence on every side; here the hot lava stream was arrested and stiffened in its onward rush, and became seamed and gashed with deep fissures as it cooled, there it spread out in vast pools in which myriads of giant bubbles formed, raised up no doubt by mighty pressures of steam from below. As the great bubbles became cold, they contracted and cracked, and the lava, in many instances, broke into pieces shaped like the truncated pyramids used in the construction of a dome of stone. There are hundreds of these symmetrical domes, large and small, with walls from 80 cm. to 1.50 m. in thickness, their crowns fallen in, presenting perfect models for the dome builder. Yet one should note that the builders of the region did not erect domes of cut stone, as the architects of Northern Syria did, and the models, so well supplied by nature in this awful upheaval, went unheeded during the periods of dome-building in the Ḥaurān. In other cases the bubbles took an oblong shape, like the hull of a ship turned bottom upward; these cracked in saw-like fissures along the keel, exposing dark caverns within. Here and there over the wide expanse of lava fields a small volcano broke forth, throwing up a cone of cinders and scoriae, one of which — Tell 'Ammar — is over 40 metres high.

But now and again, as he traverses the dismal and barren waste unrelieved by any verdure of shrub or tree, over-awed by these manifestations of angry nature in her most frightful aspect, the traveller unexpectedly comes upon secluded vales, — those patches of foam on the troubled waters as they appeared when sighted from the far off mountains —, and, for the first time, realizes why man has ever been tempted to fix his home in this black, forbidding, piece of inferno bereft of none of its horrors but its demons and its heat. Here are small flat spaces, like troughs between the waves, covered with fine, fertile, soil which bears harvests of uncommon richness. The smallest patch of earth is sown with wheat, or rye, or barley, and the villages, all marking the sites of ancient towns, are planted upon the rocks somewhere near the middle of a group of these cultivable valleys, and beside an ancient spring or well. Close to some of the villages are little groves of olives, and, here and there, are small vineyards of

sturdy vines. One can not but suspect, upon seeing these vines, and calling to mind the value of volcanic soil to wine growing, that the ancients perhaps first settled here because the soil, scant though it was, was found to produce a superior quality of wine.

The People.

It would be natural to presume that a tract like the Ledjā, so well fortified against the outside world and affording so many inaccessible retreats within, would be the haunt of wild and lawless bands who could win a livelihood by making raids upon their less well-defended neighbours living in the rich surrounding plain, and still be able to escape in safety to the natural protection of their abode, and there live free from laws and from the interference of civil or military authority. And such may have been the condition of the place in very ancient times; but, as early as the first century before Christ, the Ledjā was the seat of a highly developed civilization under the Nabataeans. Under the Romans good thoroughfares were built straight across the lava fields, and the region was dotted with settlements, each boasting its little temple erected with a fine showing of artistic skill. Later on, churches, never very large but always well built and richly decorated within, sprang up in every town. In each of these periods the people lived in good houses, well planned, and built with a view to comfort and beauty, giving every evidence of a high state of civilization. Many of the sites show signs of having been occupied by settled and more-or-less civilized Moslems during the Middle Ages. Many old buildings were remodelled, and some new ones were erected, by these early adherents of Islam. In fact it would appear that this region, one of the most desolate in all the world, has never been wholly deserted by man since he first settled here.

The inhabitants of to-day form two groups, or classes, separate and distinct. The lines of boundary between the two are well marked, and their tenures of land and other rights and privileges are distinctly defined; but the reasons for the irregularity of their geographical limitations are beyond ordinary comprehension, and are undoubtedly obscured by generations of strife which has resulted at last in comparative calm. There are first the Druses who have erected their villages upon ancient ruins in the southern part of the regions and well up toward the middle, as far as Dāmit il-^cAlyā (see Map). This people also have settlements all along the eastern rim, as far north as Sawar il-Kebîreh. The other inhabitants are Arabs, remnants of weak, broken, and dispersed, tribes, who live in tents more or less permanently placed among the ruins of ancient towns. They occupy a strip extending from the southwestern angle of the Ledjā all along, and within, the western boundary, and a broad area which embraces most of the middle, and all of the northern end of the region. The Druses, like their kin in the Djebel Ḥaurân, are, to all intents and purposes, an independent people, or were when I last visited them in 1909. The Arab settlers, on the other hand, are at least nominally subject to the Turkish government. There is an important military post, with large barracks, at Mismîyeh on the rim of the Ledjā near its northernmost end, and a small garrison at il-^cAhreh near the middle, connected with the larger post by a telegraph line. At these two places there are small settlements of Moslems, who live in houses and are not to be classed with the half-settled Bedawin. On the western rim of the Ledjā there are several villages of fair size inhabited by Moslems and Christians, and

one, Khabeb, occupied by Christians exclusively. This is the seat of the present Greek-Catholic Bishop of Boṣrā.

But even those who live on the rim of the Ledjā are usually as unacquainted with its interior as are the inhabitants of Boṣrā or Damascus. They were aghast, and looked incredulous, when we told them whence we had come, and where we had spent the last few weeks; for they think of the Ledjā as a place accursed, and of the inhabitants as thieves and cut-throats of the bloodiest variety. We, however, had not found it so. It may be that our hosts of the interior had assumed their best manners for our sakes, and had accorded to us a degree of hospitality which they would not have extended to visitors from the Ḥaurān Plain. We were a small party, unescorted, and not heavily armed; we often went about in groups of two or three, yet we were received, on the whole, with the utmost cordiality. The Druses are always hospitable to strangers, and, in the Ledjā, so far as their domain extended, they were almost too effusive in their efforts to entertain us well. Everywhere they assisted us in the search for inscriptions, everywhere they did their best to lead us to uninhabited ruins which had not been visited. They urged us to send teachers for their children, and offered to pay the teachers well if we would only send them. They urgently sought our counsel in matters of grave moment growing out of their disputes with the people of the Plain and consequently with the Turkish government. They accepted and, strange to say, put in practice, our advice in one matter of great importance to them, and desired that we might always remain with them to guide their affairs in relation to their neighbours. They are fine, healthy, specimens of their kind, living in comparative comfort, and possessed of considerable wealth, though surrounded by the poorest of neighbours.

The Bedawin also, with one or two unfortunate exceptions, received us well, and treated us kindly. The Shêkh of Sûr, although he takes his title from a place, scorns to live in a house, and contents himself with a commodious tent which is practically a fixed abode. He is the dominant figure among the settled and half-nomadic Arabs of the region. He was our guide on most of our expeditions to sites occupied by the Bedawin, and our only unpleasant experiences among the Arabs were encountered when we were so foolish as to make a journey without him, or when we were guided into Arab territory by an ancient Druse, too old to fear attack at the hands of the Bedawin, yet powerless to control them, or to convince them of the innocence of our mission. The Shêkh of Sûr is a man of quiet, courtly, manners, of gracious and distinguished bearing, and of singular beauty of countenance. On one occasion, when a band of Arabs showed themselves unfriendly, and began to make a demonstration against us, he dismounted and walked gravely forward toward the howling mob, and, with hand uplifted, commanded their attention. He then begged them, with graceful Oriental hyperbole, if they must do murder, to slay him — their relation; but at all costs to spare his friends and guests. He conducted us to a settlement where all the inhabitants seemed half-witted or wholly mad, explaining that many of the tribes brought their imbecile members to this secluded spot and left them to shift for themselves — a sort of open air lunatic asylum, and kept the half angry, half frightened, creatures at bay by his mild discourse, while we measured ruined buildings and copied inscriptions. In most of the places to which he accompanied us the settlers soon became very friendly and helped us to the extent of their ability; but in some places occupied by Arabs, which we visited without his guidance and care, we met, at first, with open hostility;

in one we were stoned until our presence was satisfactorily explained: in another, one of our party was attacked with a club, and a third place we abandoned by reason of hostile demonstrations.

We found that, although the Druses and these settled Bedawin were generally suspicious of each other, and the Arabs often jealous of their richer neighbours, there was an established *modus vivendi*; that visits were frequently exchanged, and that the inhabitants of one region could pass unmolested through the territory of the other. They are in perfect accord on one point at least, an intense hatred of the Hawarni — the people of the Plain —, and of their protectors the Turkish soldiery. It appears that some of the Bedawin are, in a sense, vassals of the Druses. That is, when winter comes, the Bedawin are entrusted with the care of the cattle of the Druses, and drive them far away to the south, to the warmer climate and better pasture of the Jôf, after the great Bedawin tribes of the desert have withdrawn to a safe distance still farther southward, and they bring their charges back again in the spring with their young half grown. No doubt the Bedawin are paid for this, perhaps in cattle, perhaps only in protection; for the Druses are a power over against the dessert, and are not afraid of the great tribes, like the ²Anazeh and the Beni Hilâl. In any event, this yearly service on the part of the half-settled Bedawin shows that an understanding has been established between them and the richer and more powerful Druses.

The Ruins.

We entered the Ledjā from the south, descending the mountain slope from the region of Ḳanawât. This is the easiest mode of access; for the rim on this side is lower and less rugged. There are passable openings in the rim at Busr il-Harîreh, at Zor'ah, and Khabeḅ, on the western boundary, and through an artificial break in the rim near Kastal Krêm on the northwest, as well as at Mismîyeh on the north, and at several points on the eastern edge. More than one traveller has penetrated the Ledjā in recent years, and inscriptions have been copied at several places; but only one of the monuments of architecture has ever been published, that is the precinct gate at Dâmit il-^cAlyā, and this only by means of a photograph.¹ M. de Vogüé published the church of St. George at Zor'ah² outside the western rim, and other buildings from Mismîyeh on the northern edge of the Ledjā. Waddington³ published inscriptions from sites on the whole extent of the rim, and a few from Dâmit il-^cAlyā and il-^cAhreh in the interior. The Rev. Ewing⁴ copied inscriptions at several sites, and Dussaud⁵ visited nine places, copying inscriptions. In 1905 I crossed the Ledjā from Khabeḅ to Umm iz-Zētân, by way of Kharsah and Dâmit il-^cAlyā; but no serious exploration of the district was ever undertaken until 1909, when the Princeton Expedition penetrated the region with the intention of visiting every ancient site that could be learned of. We succeeded in reaching all the sites already known, some of them known only from having been sighted from the Djebel Ḥaurân by Wetzstein, and placed upon his map.⁶ Monuments were studied for publication and inscriptions were copied in all of these. In addition, we discovered fifteen ancient sites hitherto unvisited, finding important monuments and

¹ *M. S. M.*, Pl. III.

² *S. C.*, Pls. 7 and 21.

³ *Wadd.* 5414—2648.

⁴ *Palestine Exploration Fund, Quarterly Statement*, 1895.

⁵ *M. S. M.* pp. 414—451.

⁶ *Reisebericht über Hauran und die Trachonen.*

interesting Greek inscriptions in most of them. No Nabataean inscriptions were found, although remains of Nabataean architecture abound. The results of our expedition of 1909 are herewith recorded in Divisions II and III, Section A, Part 7.

One of the most striking monuments belonging to that class of structures which I believe represents the architecture of prehistoric times in Southern Syria, is a great stepped pyramid at Dânit-il-^cAlyā, and there are other, less important and less well preserved, monuments of the same class to be seen in the heart of the Ledjā. The earliest historic period, the Nabataean, is represented by a variety of structures; a temple in a large temenos at Sûr, another temple in a smaller enclosure at Saḥr, a small theatre at the same place, and by architectural details of dismembered buildings at other places covering the length and breadth of the region. None of these buildings of the first centuries before and after Christ is well preserved; some of them having been built over in later centuries and others having served as quarries for many generations; but the stamp upon them is unmistakable, connecting them at sight with the earlier structures at Si^c, and with Nabataean buildings at Suwêdā and other places in the Ḥaurân. As I have said above, Nabataean inscriptions have not yet come to light among the ruins of the Ledjā, but this is not to be taken as an indication that they are not to be found. I can not but believe, in view of the plenitude of Nabataean architectural remains here, that Nabataean inscriptions will be discovered by the first explorer who takes the time, and makes the effort, to clear the ruins of débris; for, by turning over hundreds of stones, inscriptions are bound to be disclosed, inscriptions in Greek very certainly, and inscriptions in Nabataean almost as surely.

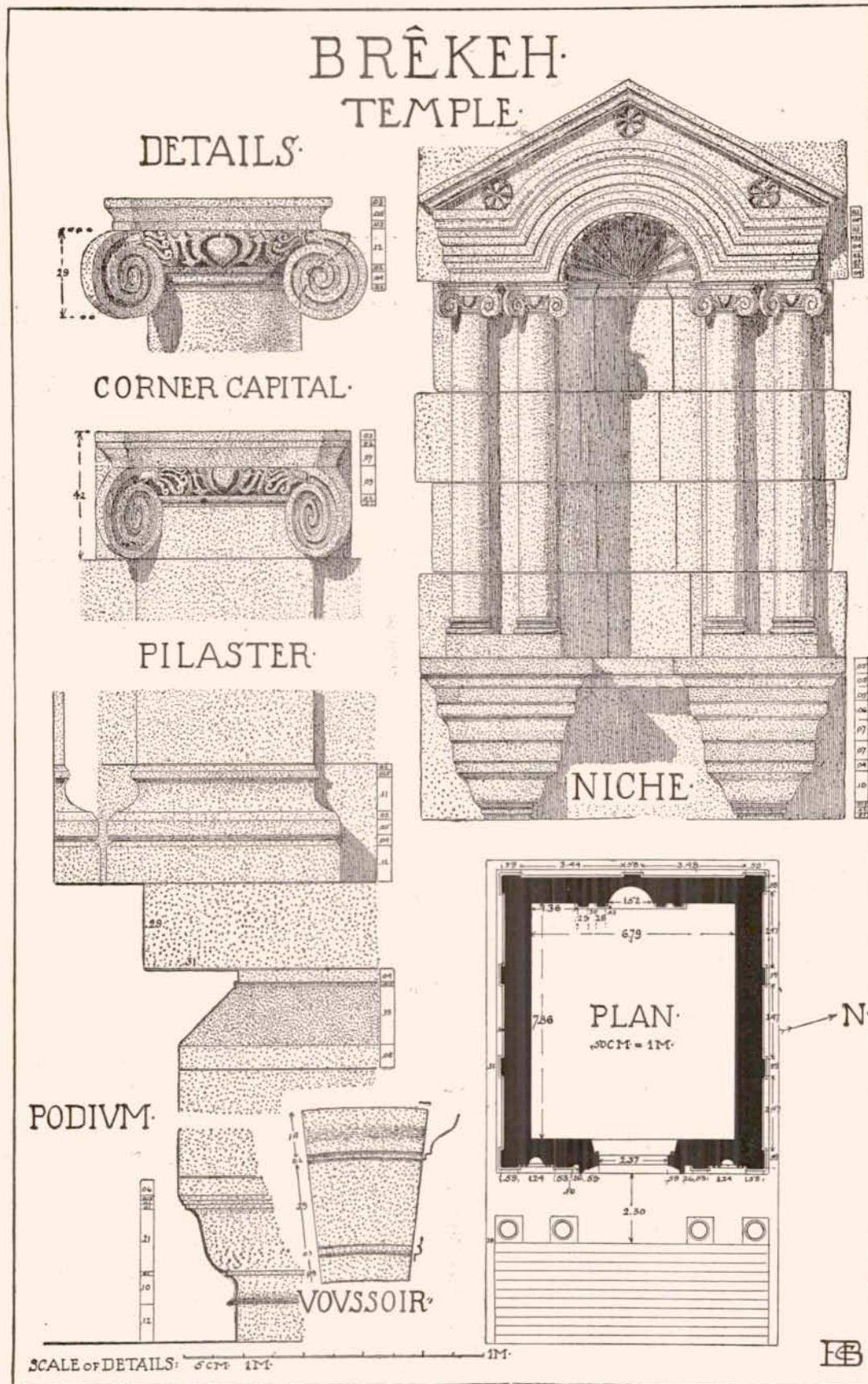
Remains of architecture of the Roman period are plentiful and of unusual interest. They represent a variety of kinds of buildings, such as temples, private houses, and monumental tombs. But few of the buildings are well preserved, though a small number preserve all, or almost all, of their details, lying in or near their ruins. The temples are small structures, usually of the plan known as prostyle tetrastyle; but they are interesting as illustrating the almost universal employment of the arcuated entablature above the middle intercolumniation of the porch.

Belonging to the Christian period there are churches and chapels, some of them in an extraordinary state of preservation and still used by the Druses as places for the entertainment of guests. This period is further represented by one large and several smaller monasteries, and by private residences some of which are of unusual extent and completeness. In all the ruins the lithic character of the architecture is apparent; the girder-arch and long roofing slabs in structures of every kind bear witness to the prevalence of stone as a material, and to the scarcity of wood. The large stone doors which appear commonly, even in the doorways of private houses, give further evidence in the same connexion.

123. BRÊKEH.

This is one of the southernmost villages of the Ledjā. It is not a large settlement, and most of its ancient buildings have been destroyed, either by the Moslems by whom a small mosque was erected here in the middle ages, or by the Druses who now inhabit the place. There are a few Greek inscriptions to be seen in different quarters of the village, not one of them in situ, as it appears. Only one ancient building is to be distinguished now among the crude modern ones, although many of the present habitations are probably, in part at least, ancient; this is a small temple in the northeastern part of the village. It is now abandoned, though it appears to have been converted into a mosque at some distant date, when its front wall which had fallen was roughly rebuilt, and a crude niche was erected against its south wall. The podium of the temple, although partly buried, is all in place, with its steps in front and the sloping side walls which bounded them on either side. The cella (Ill. 352) measures about 8.80 m. by 9.90 m. outside; there are four pilasters on either side, three in the rear, and four in the front, or east, wall, where the two which flank the broad doorway are narrower than those at the ends. The porch is very narrow, being only 2.30 m. deep, while the cap of the podium has a broad projection of 30 cm. beyond the bases of the pilasters. The little building was constructed with great care and skill. It is a complete ruin, though its rear wall is preserved to the top of the pilaster-caps, and its side walls vary in height from the same level at the rear to three or four metres at their east ends; while the front wall preserves only the lower courses of the pilasters and of the door jambs. Constant rains during our stay at Brêkeh prevented the taking of successful photographs. The interior of the cella shows highly finished walls, quite plain except at the west end where the concha of a shallow niche, 1.50 m. wide, has been torn out, leaving only the lower courses of two coupled pilasters on either side.

There are many fragments of architectural details lying inside and outside of the temple, such as the bases, shafts, and capitals of columns of one larger and two smaller orders, sections of the cornice both straight and curved, voussoirs of a large arch, and all the parts of two niches which flanked the doorway. With the aid of these fragments the restoration of the temple is a simple task. None of the columns of the porch is in situ; but it is plain that there were four, and that the middle space was arcuated. Their places may be accurately determined by placing their bases upon the edge of the porch, one opposite each of the pilasters (Ill. 352). The order used was the Ionic (Pl. XXIX), and the standing pilasters give the height of the columns. The columns of the porch were elevated upon sub-plinths with panelled sides, the bases are of the Attic type, and the shafts are unfluted. One of the angle-capitals is shown in a drawing to scale in Ill. 352, the other capitals were of the common type. The



architrave consists of two bands separated by a slender reed, the lower band is very narrow, and the cymatium is of an unusual type, consisting of a simple cyma-reversa, as may be seen in the drawing (Ill. 352) of a voussoir from the arcuated part of the architrave. The frieze was quite plain, and could be detected in the ruins only by the presence of those parts of it which belonged to the arcuated entablature. The cornice was denticulated, but it is too badly broken to be reproduced in a drawing. It was found that the sima of the cornice was separated from the corona and dentils on the east façade, the former taking the lines of the gable, the latter following the arch. The two exterior niches are represented by four heavy and very salient brackets, one of which is in place, by pieces of the stone-coursing cut with parts of the curve of a niche and with sections of coupled three-quarter columns, bases, and Ionic capitals, and by two large blocks each cut to form the concha, the arcuated entablature, and the gable of a niche. One of these niches is represented in a scale drawing in Ill. 352, and they are shown in place in the restoration (Pl. XXIX), where it will be observed there is no room to spare between the pilasters and the niches.

In the interior were found sections of the plain shafts and capitals of Ionic columns of an order slightly smaller than those of the porch. It is probable that these divided the interior and supported the roof; but excavations would be necessary to determine their number, and where they stood. It was interesting to find that the capitals of these columns had four similar faces, like the upper part of a Composite capital. I made no drawings of these capitals; but the outer angle of the exterior corner capital which is shown in Ill. 352, if reproduced all the way around, would present a very exact picture of one of these interior capitals. The great niche in the west wall, only the lower courses of which are preserved, is 1.52 m. wide, and only 60 cm. deep. It is flanked by coupled pilasters. The great concha which crowned the niche had the form of one quarter of a hollow sphere, and its projection beyond the niche which is less than a semicircle, together with the heavy mouldings and the pediment above them, were carried on two pairs of columns to which the coupled pilasters were responds. Thus the great niche of the interior and the smaller exterior niches were all reproductions on small scale of the east façade of the temple itself. The great concha of the interior niche fell from its place in the wall when its supporting columns were removed, and it was later intentionally broken up; a small part of it being taken for the erection of the *mihrab* which the Moslems built against the south wall of the cella.

The style of this little building would indicate a rather late date. The Ionic capitals with the flat bands which describe their volutes and the rather dry, stiff carving suggest the order of the street colonnades of Boṣrā, which belong probably to the time of Severus Alexander, rather than that of the temple at Hebrân which is dated in the reign of Antoninus Pius. Many of the projecting mouldings which would be expected to be curved, like the upper and lower numbers of the pilaster bases (cf. Ill. 352), are simply chamfered; but all the carving and the stonework have the highest finish, which shows that technical skill had not yet begun to decline in the Ḥaurân. It will be observed that many of the details of this little temple are quite similar to those of the so-called Basilica at Shaḳḳā¹ first published by M. de Vogüé.² The exterior niches are almost identical. The certainty with which the porch of the temple may be restored

cf. *A. A. E. S.* II, p. 367.

² *S. C. Pl.* 15.

should be useful in making a restoration of the porch of the Basilica. It is a pity that no dated inscription was found in connexion with the building at Brêkeh; for it would be useful in giving an approximate date to the very interesting and important one at Shaḳḳā, to which dates over a century apart have been assigned.

124. DJDĪYEH.

A small village inhabited by Druses in the midst of ruined ancient buildings mostly of the poorer class. Many changes appear to have been made in early Moslem times. There are a few fragments of the walls of a well built edifice which may have been a church; but the presence of modern houses prevents a thorough examination or the making of a ground-plan. A Greek inscription¹ discovered here indicates that there was a church here named in honour of St. Elias, and another inscription² mentions an apsis.

125. RĪMET IL-LUḤF.

Situated on the extreme southern edge of the Ledjā, as its name implies, this village is a Druse settlement of fair size. Fragments of ancient walls of the best quality



Ill. 353. Rîmet il-Luḥf, Tomb. View from the Southwest.

may be seen on all sides, incorporated with the crude modern constructions of the present inhabitants, and several well built arches, also of ancient construction, are still in place, some of them having been in the upper storey of the buildings to which they belonged. I have no doubt that a thorough examination of the interiors of all the modern houses and courtyards would discover many ancient remains of houses and other buildings; but this would be possible only in case of a stay of long duration, which was not possible for us.

The most conspicuous, and undoubtedly the best preserved, ancient building is a handsome tomb structure standing by itself on the western edge of the village (Ill. 353). This, according to an inscription³ in Greek, was the tomb of one Kelestinos. As it stands to-day the building has three storeys,

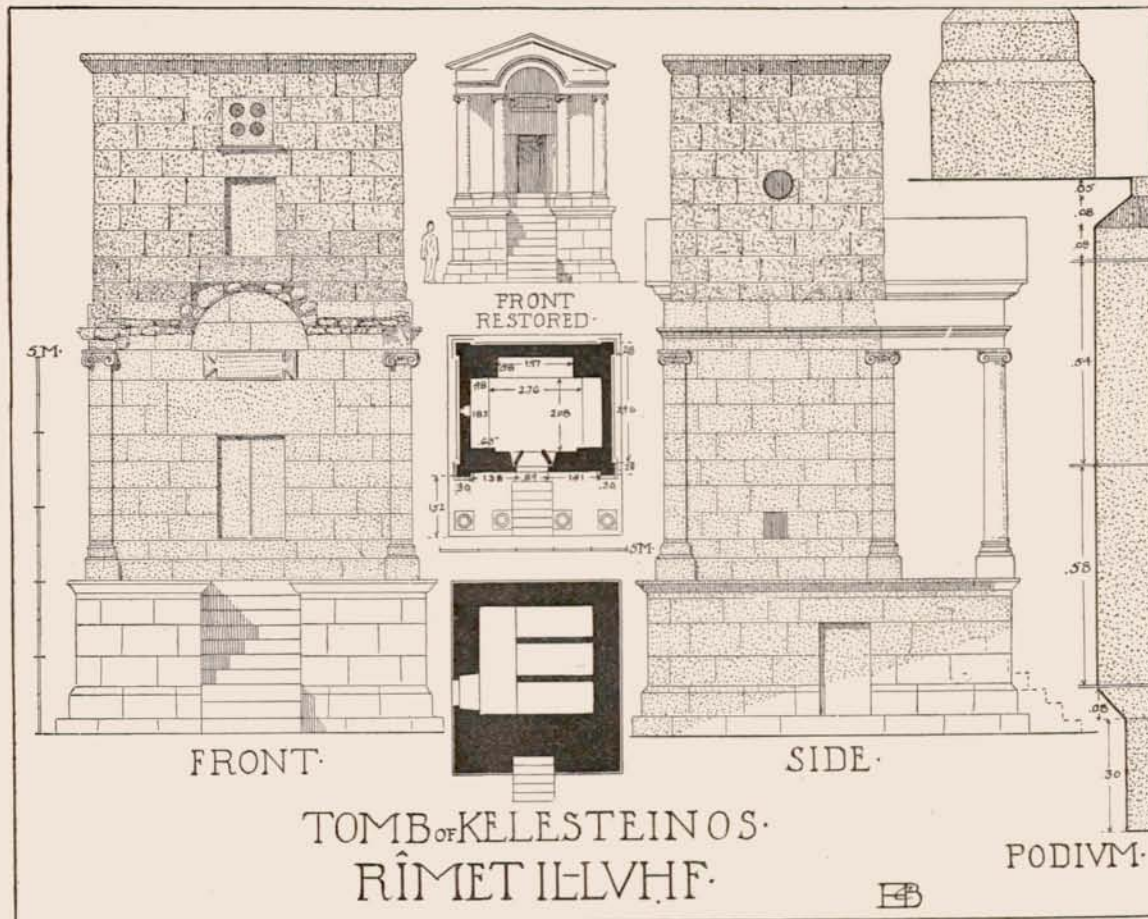
counting the podium or basement; but I am inclined to believe, owing to the decided difference in the quality of the wall structure, that the uppermost storey was an addition

¹ Div. III inscr. 783².

² Ibid. inscr. 783³.

³ Wadd. 2419.

erected a long time after the original tomb was built. The original tomb, then, appears to be a building of the second or third century after Christ. It consists of a podium (Ill. 354), about 4.50 m. by 5 m., surmounted by a smaller tomb chamber about 3.50 m. by 4.50 m., having a platform on the south side into which steps were set, and upon which, as I believe, the columns of a portico were set. The podium was entered by a small doorway on the west side. Within is a chamber containing three burial spaces like fixed sarcophagi, lying east and west. The upper chamber is entered from the



Ill. 354.

south; its stone doors are still in place. It has a burial space in each of three sides; these are not ordinary arcosolia, for they have flat tops.

The podium is severely plain, having only rightlined mouldings at its cap and base. The angles of the upper chamber are ornamented with Ionic pilasters which carry a moulded architrave on all sides but the front. The first course above the architrave is a plain frieze. In the front wall, over the doorway, is a huge lintel stone about 2.20 m. by 75 cm. and over this a stone with the Greek inscription upon a raised dovetailed placque. Above this the smooth coursing of the wall is carried up in a complete semicircle, 1.50 m. in diameter, on the level of the pilaster caps. Above the semicircle, and on either side of it, there is a break in the smooth wall, which has been filled up with loose, uneven, stones, and above this the wall of the uppermost storey begins. This is of good quality, but is not to be compared with the wall below. The abrupt

termination of the architraves at either end of this front wall, and the semicircle of highly finished stonework, indicate to my view that a portico of four columns stood upon the projecting part of the podium, that the middle intercolumniation of this porch was arcuated, and that the whole porch was roofed with stone slabs which were inserted into the wall in the space now filled with broken stones; and thus I have represented it in the small restoration of the front (Ill. 354). If this be true, the uppermost storey was built while the roofing slabs of the porch were in place. The cornice only was removed from the side walls, and the gable end from the rear wall, at the time; for the upper walls rise flush with the face of the plain frieze. The wall structure of the top storey is like that of a good class of Christian work. It is finished off in a bevelled cornice. There is a large opening closed by a stone door, in the south wall, and above it is a smaller opening filled with a perforated slab. Openings similar to this appear on other sides. The added storey may have been a columbarium as some one has suggested, since it appears that actual dovecotes were sometimes erected as a part of tombs in Syria; yet I am unable to state whether this custom prevailed in Pagan or in Christian times. In any event it was not a common custom, if we may judge by the tombs that have been spared by time in southern and northern Syria.

126. TELL ID-DIBBEH.

On a small plateau some eight or ten metres higher than the surrounding country, and possibly a low, small, extinct crater, is the deserted ruin of this name. The site is near the southern edge of the Ledjā. The upper part of the plateau is surrounded by a wall of crude and massive construction. There are roughly built walls within the surrounding wall; but no cut stones were seen. The ruins seem to be of prehistoric origin. There was a road which led from the plain to the top of the plateau, and there is a good spring near the lower end of the road.

127. NEDJRÂN.

One of the larger Druse villages in the southern part of the Ledjā, not far from the rim. The ancient site upon which the present village was built appears to have been of no great importance. The tower which to-day dominates the village was probably of Christian origin and may have belonged to a church; but the modern buildings which cluster about it make it impossible to prove this. The place has been completely rebuilt, and there are very few signs of antiquity; yet the settlement was among the more ancient of the region, as is shown by an inscription¹ of Agrippa.

128. DÊR IL-ASMAR.

This is the deserted ruin of a small and rather crudely built early Christian village.

129. UMM IL-‘ALAK.

Situated on a small, low, plateau, this deserted ruin appears to be entirely of prehistoric origin, like Tell-id-Dibbeh described above. A heavy, crude, wall surrounds

¹ Div. III, inscr. 785.

it, and there are crude ancient constructions against the wall on the inside. There is a ruined tomb-tower below the ruin, like those of the Nabataean period at Si^c and elsewhere.

130. BESHM.

Here are scattered ruins of a prehistoric settlement which was occupied in early Christian times by a poorly built and small village. The site is deserted and is of small interest and importance.

131. IL-^cAHREH (*Aerita*).

This place has been mentioned before as one of the large villages of the Ledjā. It is inhabited by Moslems, and is the seat of a small Turkish garrison. It is situated well up toward the middle of the lava tract, a little nearer the eastern side, at the foot of the largest of the volcanic cones of the region, called Tell Ammar. The ancient town was of more than average size; but the site appears to have been occupied continuously since its earliest settlement, and every building of Pagan or Christian times has been broken up. It is probable that several comparatively large structures were used as quarries at the time of the erection of the Turkish barracks. It is evident that there was at least one temple here, for one of the modern buildings has many beautifully carved fragments from a Classical building of fairly large scale. It is also worth noting that many Greek inscriptions have been copied at this place, most of them having been published by Waddington¹. Our expedition did not tarry here, not desiring to arouse the interest of the military.

132. SMÊD.

In order to visit a group of ancient sites to the north and northeast of il-^cAhreh, which had never been visited by archaeologists, we pitched camp at Smêd, well to the north of il-^cAhreh, and made short excursions to the other places. Smêd itself is a Druse village of medium size, built entirely out of the ruins of ancient buildings. It stands upon the crest of broad wave of lava with smoothly rounded sides and top. The buildings, ancient and modern, were of course set directly upon this hard, even, foundation. In the southeastern quarter of the village there are extensive remains of a good ancient pavement laid in rectangular blocks of lava. At one side of this paved square stand a low tower and an ancient building of small dimensions. The tower is either early Christian or Mediaeval and is poorly built; the other building contains a shrine much venerated by the Druses. The little structure has been much altered, and it would be difficult to discover its original purpose without removing some of the modern constructions. It seemed unwise to make an effort to measure the building in the presence of the entire population to whom it is an exceedingly sacred spot, especially as the villagers were particularly kind in assisting us to copy a number of Greek inscriptions which have been incorporated with the walls of the shrine. An inscription² mentions a pavement, - doubtless the one still to be seen, - and altars; another³ mentions a temenos of Helios. I am inclined to believe, in view of the small extent

¹ Wadd. 2437—2450.

² Div. III, inscr. 786^b.

³ Ibid. inscr. 786.

of the ruins and of the present village, that the place was, in ancient times, only the site of this temenos, which was paved, and surrounded by a well built wall, and furnished with votive altars. There may have been also a small temple here, of which the Druse shrine was the cella; but this can not be stated definitely.

133. MDJÊDIL.

On the way to this place which lies to the southeast of Smêd, we passed through Burd, a ruin of small size that has been plundered of all its better building-materials. It may have been a small monastery in early Christian times. It is to-day hardly more



Ill. 355. Mdjêdil, Fragments of Sculpture.

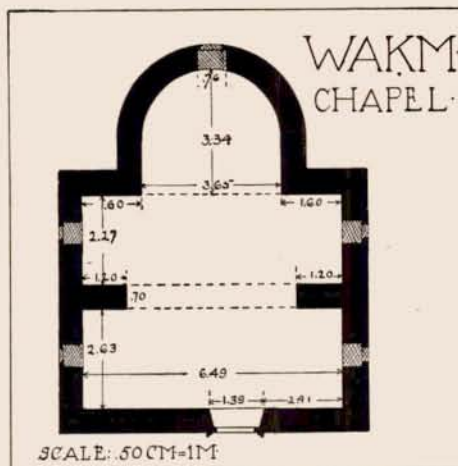
than a heap of broken stones. Mdjêdil, on the other hand, is a place of considerable interest. The present Druse village is small; but it occupies the site of an ancient town of considerable extent. There are no buildings that are well preserved; for the place has served as a quarry for some of the villages that lie just outside the eastern rim of the Ledjâ. The ruins cover the eastern slope of a huge wave of lava, the crest of which is the site of an ancient watch tower. The ancient town was divided into a northern and a southern section about five minutes walk apart. In both sections there are quantities of fragments of well-dressed stone and of good mouldings and other architectural carving. We discovered a number of Greek inscriptions of more than ordinary interest, and some fragments of figure sculpture (Ill. 355), including the torso and feet of a statue of Athena wearing the aegis, — the combined height of the fragments being 79 cm. — and a headless eagle of interesting type, 51 cm. high. It was at this place that we observed well preserved remains of an ancient Roman road, one strip of it leading into the northern section of the ancient town from the north northeast — the direction of Mismiyeih — and another leading out of the southern section almost due south in the direction of Slêm and Suwêdâ.

134. WAËM.

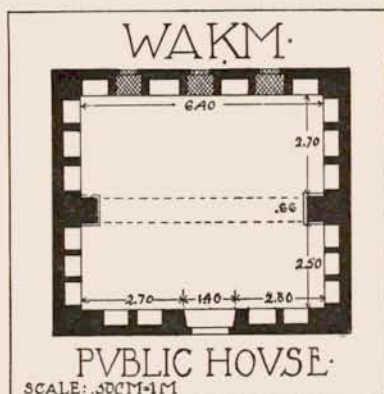
The village of this name is a small one to the northwest of Smêd, built among the ruins of a small ancient site. The few inhabitants, who are Druses, seem to have

done little to destroy the ancient buildings, being content apparently to occupy such of the old houses as were easily repaired. Most of the destruction seems to have been done in earlier Moslem times. The ancient walls are for the most part built of roughly dressed stones very well laid.

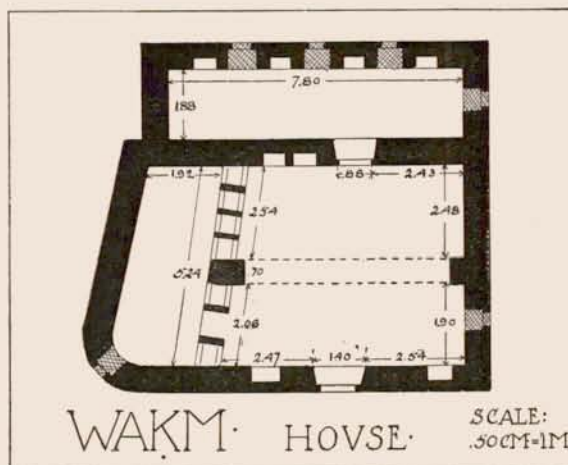
On a slight eminence a little to the east of the middle of the ruins is a small open square with ancient buildings on all sides of it. On the eastern side is a small chapel, quite perfect but for the slabs of its roof. Its front wall is of highly finished masonry, all the rest is roughly dressed. The plan (Ill. 356) is almost square, spanned by a single girder-arch, and having a disproportionately large projecting apse, the half dome of which has fallen in. The mouldings of the jambs and lintel of the doorway are right-lined in profile, but of excellent workmanship. On the north side of the open space is a building, part of which at least, according to an inscription¹ of the year 316 A. D., was built at the public expense. This part consists of a single large room (Ill. 357) spanned by a broad girder arch, and having numerous large, rectangular, niches, like cupboards or lockers, set close together in the walls on all sides. In the wall opposite the entrance the niches alternate with windows. These niches, 20 in all, are almost 60 cm. wide, 30 cm. deep, and over



Ill. 356.



Ill. 357.



Ill. 358.

a metre high; they are set rather too high in the wall to have served as mangers, which they somewhat resemble in other respects; they are well finished, and have an inset all around as if for doors of wood. The building may have had some civic function; for its inscription is unusual in that it is dated by the Roman consuls. The upper storey of the building is entirely ruined.

The ancient dwelling-houses of the town are of the type most common in the

¹ Div. III, inscr. 788.

Ḥaurân, that with a high arched room in front and two or more low storeys of corbel-and-slab construction in the rear. All of them were well built, and many are quite well preserved. The house which I have chosen to illustrate by means of a ground-plan (Ill. 358) stands upon a street corner, and the angle of the building is rounded off to facilitate traffic. In this example there is a stable attached to one side of the large arched room, the partition between the two being made up below of a row of mangers. The interior faces of the walls, the high arch, and the mangers, are all made of carefully dressed blocks of basalt. Several Greek inscriptions were found among the ruins, few of them in situ; but all of course hitherto unknown.

135. KHUREBÂT.

This deserted ruin was never a large settlement. As it stands to-day it comprises a group of houses belonging chiefly to the early Christian period. The construction of these houses is not very good, and suggests that the settlement was rather a poor one. Nevertheless there are many dressed blocks set at random in the poorer walls, and numerous fragments of mouldings and other details, which show that there was a building of some beauty and importance here in the second or third century after Christ. An inscription¹ in Greek, upon one of the stones, roughly set in a much later wall, suggests that this was the site of a temple, or a temenos, sacred to the native deity Lykourgos. It may be that this place was occupied in antiquity by a sacred enclosure, and, like Smêd, was a religious site rather than an ordinary village. Detached from the principal ruin, and on higher ground toward the west, are remains of a small walled village of the crudest construction, which is probably much older than the oldest buildings in the lower village, and may be prehistoric.

136. KHARSAH.

Here is a modern Druse village of medium size, showing fragments of exceedingly good ancient walls and arches that are now parts of inhabited houses. A small number of small ancient houses are still preserved; these were built of well finished, though very porous, blocks of basalt. They have simple right-lined, or bevelled, cornices and other mouldings. The arch of the public summer sitting-place of the village, which is not a house, like the winter *medâfehs*, but an open-air place roofed with boughs and wild grass, is composed of inscribed voussoirs placed without reference to the writing upon them. These voussoirs are said to have come from a well-built structure in the centre of the village, with an arched niche toward the north. The building is now inhabited and no plan of it could be secured. The inscription² on the arch refers to a statue of Nike. On the journey from Kharsah, west by south, to Lubbên and Djrên, two unimportant ruins were passed, Der Berâni, a ruin of a small and poor monastery, and idj-Djadj, a group of completely ruined houses of the poorer class. Both ruins are uninhabited. An inscription³ found in the latter place mentions a chapel of St. Elias.

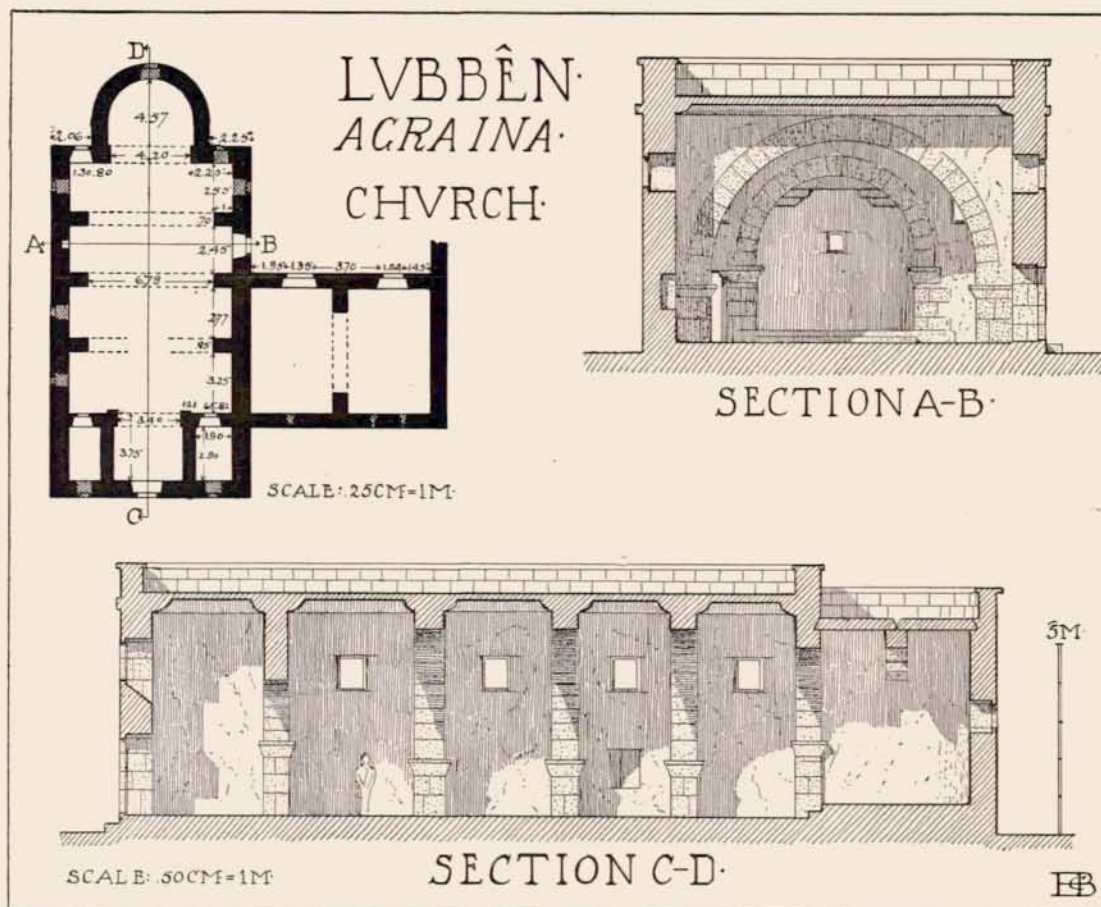
¹ Div. III, inscr. 987.

² Div. III, inscr. 790¹.

³ Div. III, inscr. 791.

137. LUBBÊN (*Agraina*).

Lubben is an inhabited ruin a little southwest of the centre of the Ledjā. By a strange coincidence this ruin has exchanged names with the neighbouring ruin now called Djrên. Some time after Waddington's visit, presumably at the time of the Druse settlement here, ancient *Agraina*, called by the Arabs Djrên, became Lubbên, and the Arabs' Lubbên became Djrên. There can be no doubt of this, for there are inscriptions¹ in situ here which give the ancient name, as *Agraina*, and which were copied by



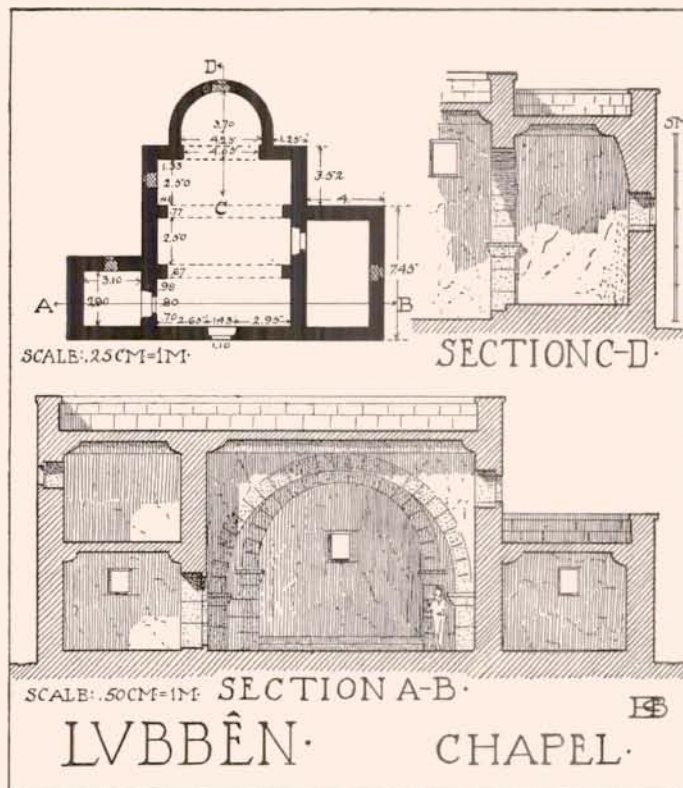
Ill. 361.

Waddington when the ruin was still called Djrên. This ruin is one of the most extensive in the Ledjā, and is only partly inhabited by Druses. Two churches and many houses of the early Christian period are very well preserved, and there are many more houses, less well preserved, which extend over a considerable area.

CHURCH. Date 417 A. D. The larger of the two churches (Ill. 359) stands near the centre of the ruins, with a group of residential buildings adjoining it on the south (Ill. 360). It is one of the best preserved churches in Southern Syria, two of its three interior arches being in place with the roofing-slabs above them. The plan (Ill. 361) is that of the hall-church so common in the region, i. e. a long nave spanned by three transverse arches widely spaced, and having a protruding apse toward the east. But

¹ Wadd. 2455, 2457, = Wetz. nos. 114, 113.

the arrangement of the west end is unusual; here there are two chambers which were carried up in two storeys, like towers, with a square narthex between them. The chambers, not unlike the prothesis and diaconicon which often flank the apse of a north Syrian church, open upon the nave by means of narrow doorways; while the narthex is separated from the nave by an arch which embraces its entire width. The arch is still standing. On the soffit of its lowest voussoir on the left is the inscription¹ which gives the ancient name of the town; but unfortunately no date. The chambers beside the narthex are preserved to the height of one storey; but the fallen building stones within and around them show that each had at least one more storey. The first arch of the nave has fallen; but the other two are in place, and still support the well-fitted roof-slabs. The basalt pavement of the church is visible throughout the nave. The crowns of the arches are a little less than 5 metres above the pavement, and the piers are only 1.33 m. high, giving to the interior a low and broad effect, (Section A.-B.). On



Ill. 362.

probably not in its original position, though it has every appearance of being so (Ill. 360).

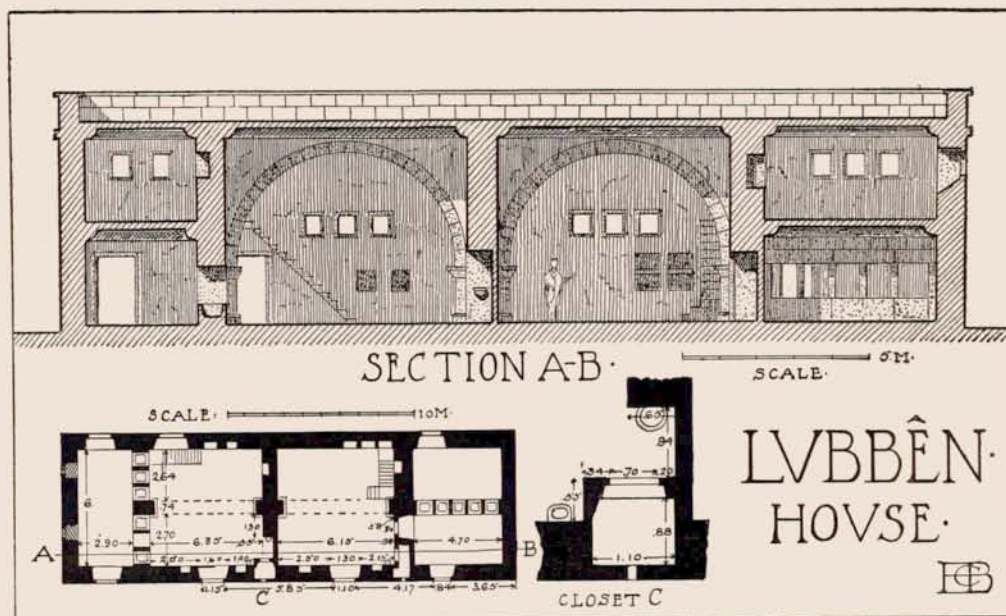
CHAPEL. The smaller church, which I have designated as the chapel, is less well built than the other, and appears to be of later date. It is preserved throughout, and is used to-day as the public *medâfeh* of the shêkh of the village. The undivided nave is spanned by two transverse arches about 6.50 m. wide, set on piers 1.50 m. high, the apse is deeply set, and is roofed by means of a corbel course set upon an in-curving wall and carrying slabs (Ill. 362). On the north side of the westernmost bay is a doorway leading into a small square chamber in two storeys, and on the south

the north side of the apse a narrow doorway opens out of doors. The apse itself is deeply set; it would be possible to draw the semicircle of the apse to a complete circle within the apse arch. The covering of the apse is not a half dome. At the level of the haunch of the apse arch, corbels are set on either side and connected by a heavy stone beam, upon which flat slabs are laid to complete the covering. Upon the beam is an inscription² which seems to give the date 417 A. D. There is a small window in the apse, and several larger windows set high in the bays of the nave. A doorway on the south side in the second bay from the east end gives upon a courtyard surrounded with buildings which were probably residences for the clergy. Upon the lintel of a doorway on the west side of this court is an inscription³ of the year 233 A. D., which is

¹ Div. III, inscr. 793².² Div. III, inscr. 793³.³ Div. III, inscr. 793¹.

side of the middle bay is another doorway leading into an oblong room one storey high, which extends westward to the line of the west wall of the chapel. The nave, the apse, and these two chambers all have their original roof-slabs still in place, and the original pavement is still in use.

HOUSES. Of the large number of ancient houses which might be chosen to illustrate the domestic architecture of ancient *Agraina*, the one here presented (Ill. 363) is a typical example. It stands on the eastern side of the ruins and is in reality two houses that formed part of a long row which apparently stood with their rear walls toward the street and their fronts upon a walled garden common to all. Each residence consists of one large arched room with an oblong room two storeys high adjoining it at the side. In both cases the lower floor was used as a stable. In the case of the two residences illustrated here, the large arched apartments are placed next to each other with the two-storey smaller apartments on the right and left. The two larger rooms are of



Ill. 363.

nearly equal dimensions. That on the left has a doorway upon the street. The stable in the house on the left is arranged like that of a majority of the simpler houses with stables, i. e. the partition wall between the living-room and the stable is composed of mangers with uprights between them, so that the heads of the animals were visible from the living room, three on one side of the pier of the main arch, and two on the other, the third space on this side being utilized as a passage from the large room into the stable. The stable has doorways at both ends; the long room over it, which was probably a sleeping apartment, was reached by a long flight of corbelled steps in the rear wall of the living-room. The plan of the residence on the right differs slightly from that of the other and is somewhat more luxurious. Here the two-storey part of the house is rather larger, the stable is cut off from the living-room by a thick wall with a narrow doorway in it. The row of mangers lies in the opposite direction, dividing this part of the house into two sections. One section has a doorway giving upon the gardens, the doorway of the other opens upon the street. This apparently was the

stable proper, the other division provided an extra room for the house. The upper storey here is divided into two sleeping rooms; it is reached by a corbelled stair on the dividing wall, which ascends by two goings beginning beside the pier of the great girder arch. Both residences are provided with latrinae ingeniously fitted into the thickness of the walls. The latrina of the left hand house is set in the front wall at its angle with the partition wall (see enlarged scale drawing in Ill. 363), the frame of its little doorway stands out from the wall surface, and the partition wall is thinned down to provide space for entrance, forming a niche in the side of which is the doorway to the closet. There is a small wash-hand-basin set in the side of the niche opposite the doorway, and a larger one in the front wall beside the doorway. The other latrina stands in the corresponding angle of the next room and is set in the thickness of both walls, doing away with the necessity of a niche. Both closets are made of highly finished stonework, the walls, in places, being not more than 20 cm. thick, and the roofs being of thin slabs closely joined. Indeed the stonework in this entire row of houses is of the best quality; the walls are of well finished blocks, but the arches and piers, the mangers and the supports between them, the door and window frames, the steps, as well as the latrinae, are highly finished.

138. DJRËN.

This place was formerly called Lubbën by the Arabs, as has been explained above. It is an imposing ruin when seen from a distance, standing as it does on high ground with two towers looming up as landmarks. But it is rather disappointing on closer inspection, having been almost completely rebuilt in early Moslem days: it is now inhabited by a few families of Druses. One of the towers, to which reference has been made, is a massive, though crudely built, structure of two high storeys, set on the highest point in the ruins. It has an inscription in large Nabataean letters carved upon a lintel of rough, porous basalt over a large window in the upper storey; but it can not be proved that the lintel occupies its original place. There are many ruined houses belonging to the Christian period, of a better and a poorer class of masonry; but most of them have been either despoiled of all their details, which were of cut stone, or have been crudely rebuilt.

The second tower belongs to a large ancient house that is now in part inhabited by the shêkh of the Druse village, and is the best preserved of the monuments of the ancient town. The house was built around a court-yard. The entrance is a long passage in the ground floor of the tower which is three storeys high (Ill. 364). To the right, as one enters, is a row of large arched rooms in one storey, separated by narrow rooms with corbel-and-slab construction, two storeys high. One of the arched rooms is now used by the shêkh as his *medâfeh*. The rooms on the other two sides of the court have been crudely rebuilt. The altar shown in Illustration 365 stands, with some architectural fragments, in the middle of the courtyard of this house. It is about a metre high, and has a sort of pedestal, a base, a die, a cap, and an over-cap consisting of the usual "horns". There are no mouldings save bevelled faces. An inscription¹ in Greek, carved upon an inverted dove-tailed plate upon one side of the

¹ Div. III, inscr. 792.

die, gives a date which corresponds to 140 A. D. The monument is important in affording one more proof that the bevel, or splay face, even when used to the exclusion of other mouldings, is not to be looked upon as only a Christian form of decoration.



Ill. 364. Djrên. Entrance Tower of large Ancient House.



Ill. 365.

139. HARRAN.

This place, due south of Lubbên, was formerly a town of considerable extent and importance. Unfortunately it was chosen as a place for settlement by the early Moslems and was almost completely rebuilt by them. It is occupied to-day by a small group of Druse families, who in the construction of their own crude dwellings have accomplished the complete destruction of the ancient buildings. When Waddington reached this place in the early sixties he found the famous bilingual inscription¹ in Greek and Arabic in place over the doorway of a building which he calls a church. The inscription, now badly defaced, stands upon two jambs at the side of a great mass of ruins which are in all probability those of the church to which it belonged. So thoroughly has the building been demolished that it is quite impossible to secure the smallest data for a reconstruction of its plan. The place has been used as a quarry, the cut stones have all been removed, and the ordinary building-stones lie in confused heaps. It is a great pity that M. de Vogüé did not come to this place; for undoubtedly he would have made plans and the necessary restorations, and it would have been interesting to

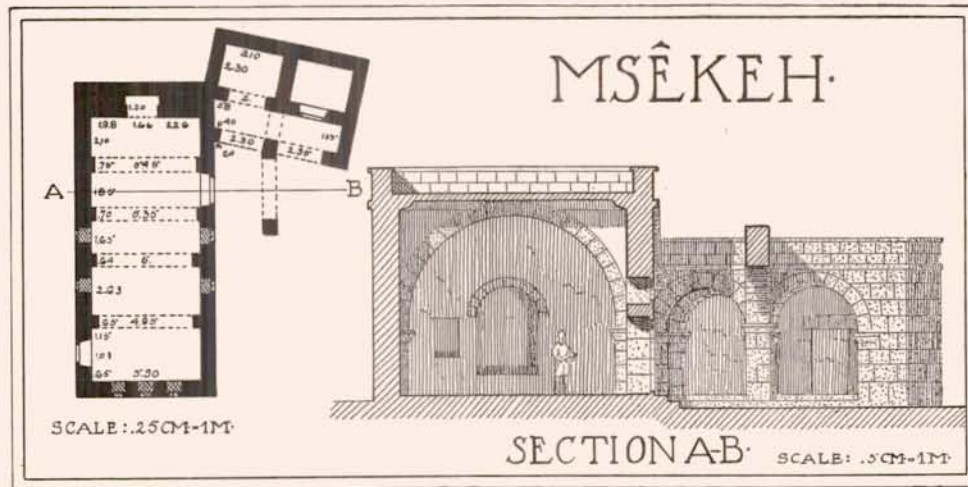
¹ Wadd. 2464.

have had some permanent records of these Christian Arabic buildings, dated in the year 568 A. D. and sufficiently cosmopolitan in character to require an inscription in both Arabic and Greek.

Among the modern houses are fragments of ancient ones which show excellent workmanship and interesting details, such as windows with shade-stones carried upon carved corbels, arched entrances, ornamental niches, and ingeniously planned latrinae; but all of these are in places where it would be difficult to take measurements or photographs of them. Altogether, Ḥarrân is now a very disappointing ruin.

140. MSEKEH.

Near the southwestern extremity of the Ledjā, not far from the large villages of Zorāh and Busr il-Harīri on the rim, is this extensive deserted ruin which had not been reached by explorers before the time of our visit. Though comparatively near two large settlements, the ruin is separated from both by such impassible fields of lava



Ill. 366.

that it has not been plundered of its building-stones, and it contains a number of ancient buildings intact and many interesting unpublished inscriptions. If the place had not been inhabited by Moslems in the Middle Ages, it would be to-day a very perfect specimen of an ancient town of the Ledjā. As it is, it contains many houses of the early Christian period and several buildings which may be of earlier date. There is a fairly large mosque, in quite a good state of preservation, standing as a monument of Mediaeval times. The ruins cover a comparatively extensive area. In the midst is a large open space, like a common, near the middle of which stands a tower which is dated by an inscription¹ set up between the years 247 and 249 A. D.

In the southwestern quarter of the ancient town there is an unusual type of building (Ill. 366) which, for various reasons, I hesitate to call a church, and which, in plan and structure, resembles the long hall of the Kaisariyeh at Shaḳḳā² more closely than it does any other building. The building is roughly oriented. It consists of a long hall spanned by four transverse arches which are spaced at varying widths. There is

¹ Div. III. inser. 795⁴.

² S. C. Pl. 8, A. A. E. S. II, p. 370.

no true apse, nor any narrowing of the arch at the end of the hall, as is the case in small churches which have no apse; but there is a niche 1.66 m. wide in the thickness of the wall at one end of the hall. A large doorway opens out from the second bay from the end having the niche, and another opens from the other side of the last bay. The stonework is of the best quality throughout, much better than that of most of the churches of Southern Syria. All the arches are standing (Ill. 367). The roofing-slabs of the easternmost bay have fallen; but those of the next two bays are in place, as are more than half the slabs of the two remaining bays. The arches with their spandrils, and the under surface of the roofing-slabs, are covered with a thin coat of plaster, which in the soffits of the arches and on the slabs retains extensive remains of painted decoration. The wall spaces between the arches were covered by several coats of plaster, most of which has fallen off except near the top of the wall, and the entire wall on either side of, and above, the niche bears remnants of its plaster covering. The remnants of painted decorations are in blues, yellows, reds, greens, and dark brown. The patterns which are visible are those upon the soffits of the arches and upon the ceiling. They consist of interlaces, about 15 cm. wide, woven about medallions about 35 cm. wide on the soffits and rather wider on the ceiling. The spaces in the angles between the interlaces and the straight edges are filled with birds and small animals. The medallions probably contained figures; for in each circle the painting has been completely and intentionally defaced, perhaps by Christians who objected to Pagan pictures or by image-hating Moslems. Even the small figures of birds and animals in the interlaces have been for the most part defaced, but less thoroughly.

The painting was very well executed, so far as one may judge from injured fragments. It is to be regretted that we had no appliances for taking photographs of objects almost directly over head, and in comparative darkness. The character of the interior finish of this building, and the sort of painting represented here, appear to me to be earlier than the Christian period in the art of Syria.

Adjoining this building at its southeast angle, but set at an irregular angle with it, is a small structure consisting of two rooms with an arched portico in front of them (Ill. 368). The room next to the larger building opens upon the portico by a broad arch, the other has a doorway. The portico consists of two arches, is roofed with slabs, and is closed at the ends. The stonework is of the finest quality. Opposite the pier between the two arches is a free-standing pier which, with the other pier, carries a broad arch in front of the main entrance to the larger building. Over this doorway are the lower parts of two pilasters set on corbels, as may be seen in the photographs (Ill. 368). How the pilasters were finished, or what decorative scheme they were parts of, what relation they bore to the broad arch in front of the doorway, and what rôle was played by the broad arch, are all matters of conjecture.

Within the arched portico, at the end next to the larger building, were found several small altars of very simple designs, two of which have early inscriptions¹ carved upon them. One of these is dated in the year 133 A. D., the other 136 A. D. It is highly improbable that these altars were brought hither from a distance; it seems much more likely that they were originally set up as dedicatory offerings in this portico, and were afterwards piled up in the corner where we found them. If this be true, and if we

¹ Div. III, inscr's 795⁷, 795⁸.

consider the other evidence which points to a pre-Christian date for the buildings, it seems easily credible that this was a Pagan public building of some sort. The Praetorium at Mismiyeh had dedicatory inscriptions carved upon its walls though it was not a religious building.¹ And again, the only building connected with the Pagan religious sanctuary at Dêr Smêdj, near K̄anawât, is of almost the same form as this building at Msêkeh, which one would not ordinarily identify as a Pagan religious structure.

141. IL-UBÊR.

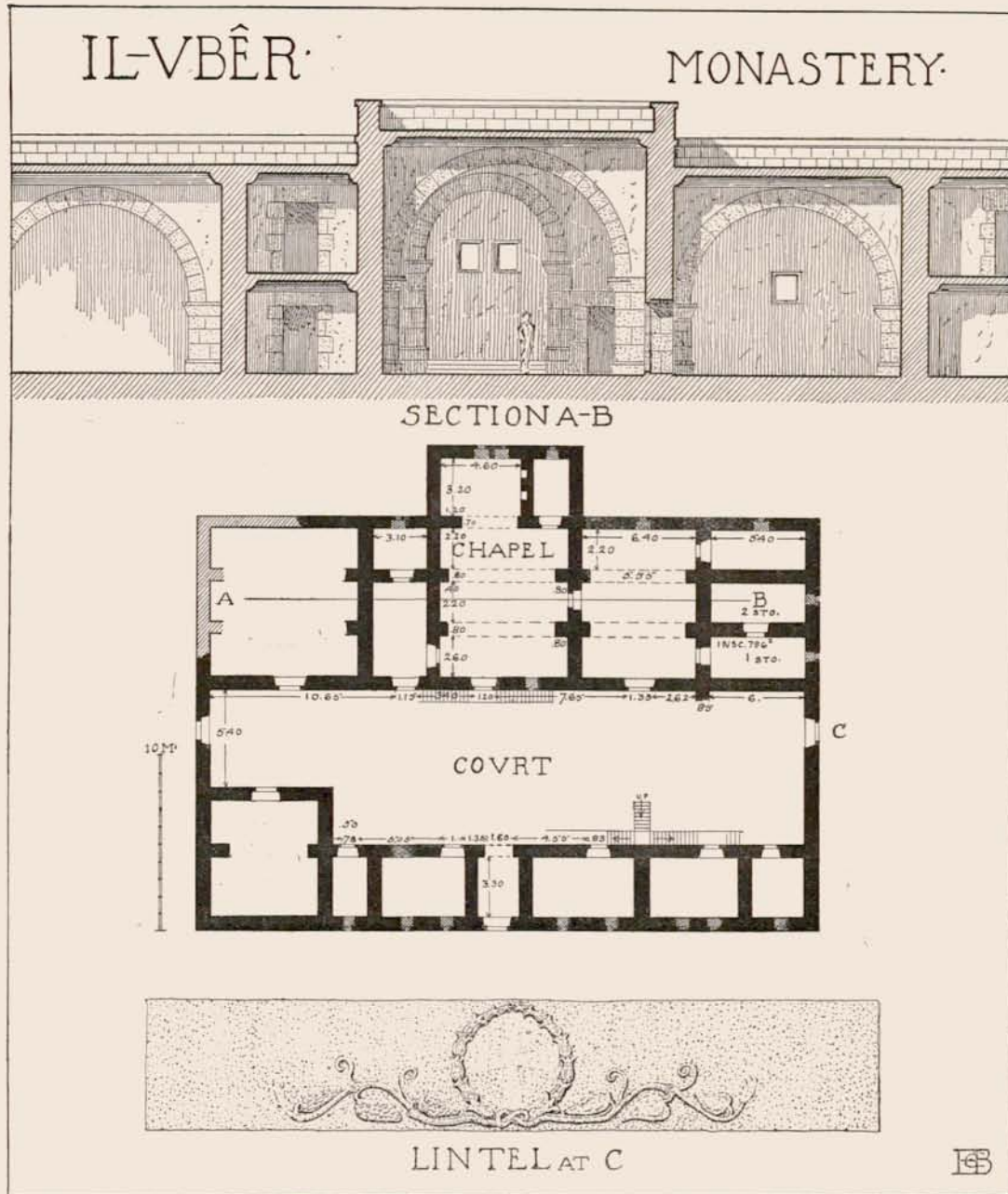
A short distance to the northwest of Msêkeh lies this comparatively small, but interesting, ruin, quite deserted and preserving its buildings in excellent condition. So far as I can discover, it had not been reached by travellers before our visit in 1909. The ruins are those of a religious settlement of Christian times, consisting of a monastery of fair size and a little independent chapel. The remains of houses sparsely scattered near the two buildings are of far poorer construction, and may be of the early Moslem period.

MONASTERY. The monastic building presents a rather unusual plan (Ill. 369), that of a large quadrangle of about 25 m. by 35 m. with the rectangular sanctuary of its chapel protruding from the middle of its eastern side. Within, there is a long, narrow, open court terminating at the north and south walls of the quadrangle, where there are doorways. In the northwest angle there is a large square room spanned by a transverse arch. The other rooms, extending along the west side of the court, are much narrower in proportion and are two storeys high. Near the middle of the west side is a vestibule with a doorway in the outer wall and an open arch within. On either side of this are rooms of varying lengths. The upper floor was reached by corbelled stairs leading in both directions from a high landing which was reached by built steps. This side of the court is not quite so well preserved as the other.

The east side of the quadrangle contains the more important buildings, or rooms, of the monastery. In the middle, opposite to the main vestibule, is the chapel. This has a broad undivided nave of three bays divided by transverse arches. The east end of the chapel projects beyond the east wall of the quadrangle, and consists of a rectangular sanctuary with one side-chamber, that on the south. The chancel arch is thus not on axis with the nave, but is set on the line of the main east wall of the quadrangle. To the right of it is a doorway opening into the single side chamber. The effect of this asymetry is perhaps best observed in the cross section given in Ill. 369. South of the chapel, and entered from it by a narrow doorway, is a large arched room almost equal to the nave in size, and also spanned by two broad transverse arches. This room is one storey high; but its flat roof is not quite so high as that of the chapel. Beyond this room to the south are three narrow chambers corresponding in width to the bays of the nave and the large arched room. This part of the building has two storeys; but the westernmost of the three apartments contained the staircase which was of wood and set upon occasional corbels. North of the chapel are a larger and a smaller chamber both in two storeys, and beyond these another large arched apartment in the northwest angle of the quadrangle, which is now in ruins probably because its arches were

¹ Wadd. 2525 et seq.

not sufficiently buttressed on the outside. This structure is very well built throughout. The piers and arches, the door and window frames, the corbel courses and roofing-slabs are all highly finished, the walls are of smooth quadrated masonry. Only one piece of

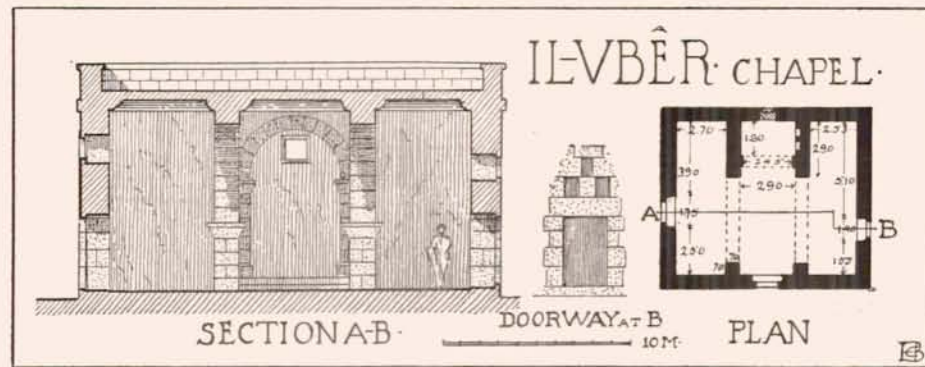


Ill. 369.

carved ornament was found, that was the lintel of a doorway (C) (Ill. 369) in the south end of the quadrangle.

CHAPEL. A short distance to the north of the monastery stands a small chapel in an almost perfect state of preservation. It was very well built, but shows a lower degree of workmanship than the monastery. Its plan (Ill. 370) is a most unusual one. Almost a square, it is divided into three nearly equal aisles by two arches which spring

at the east from the ends of two walls between which is the sanctuary with its chancel arch. This arrangement leaves two deep recesses at the ends of the side aisles, on either side of the sanctuary, but these give no evidence of having been divided off to



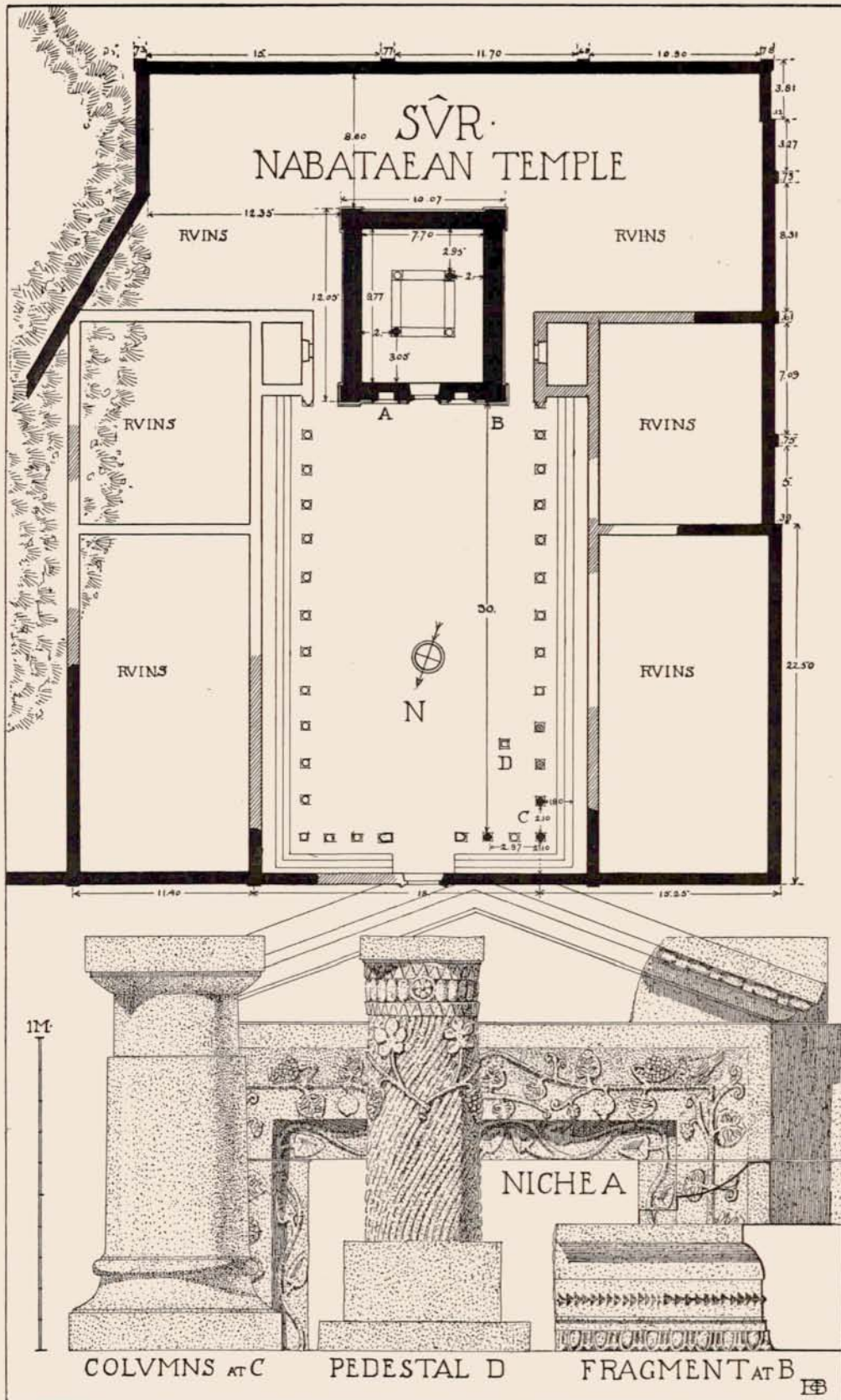
Ill. 370.

serve as a prothesis and diaconicon. The chapel has a doorway in every side except the east. The doorway on the south (B. in Ill. 370) has a group of three windows above it arranged in an unusual manner, as the drawing shows.

142. SÛR.

Sûr is situated almost due north of Msêkeh. It is one of the most interesting ruins in the Ledjâ, but it has been almost completely destroyed. It is now occupied only by a more-or-less permanent encampment of Bedawin. Its destruction must have been wrought in early Christian and Moslem times. The ruins present remains from the Nabataean, the Roman, and the Christian periods; but the architectural remains of the earliest of the three periods are by far the most interesting.

NABATAEAN TEMPLE. On the western side of the ruins, on rather lower ground than most of them, and at the foot of a high lava-wave which rises toward the east is a large walled temenos (Ill. 371) about 50 m. long and 40 m. wide. Southward from the middle of this enclosure stand the walls of a small temple, in front of which was a long, narrow, peristyle court bounded on either side by buildings now completely ruined. The general plan as described above does not appear to the casual observer. The south and west walls of the temenos, with their pilasters at wide intervals, are perfectly evident from the outside, since they are preserved to heights varying from four to six metres. But the interior of the temenos is a confused mass of fallen and broken building material. The temple walls, though preserved to a height of at least three metres, are almost completely buried in débris. The peristyle court is recognized only by the presence of displaced columns, and three columns in situ near the northwest angle of the court. The buildings which flanked the court are now marked by heaps of broken stone; only their outer limits could be measured. The little temple was built in the beautiful and unmistakable manner of the first centuries B. C.—A. D. It was possible to make a complete plan of the cella, even to discover the position of its interior columns, which, like the interior supports of the Nabataean temples at Sî^c, formed a square within the cella. The front wall, with its doorway and niches, is intact



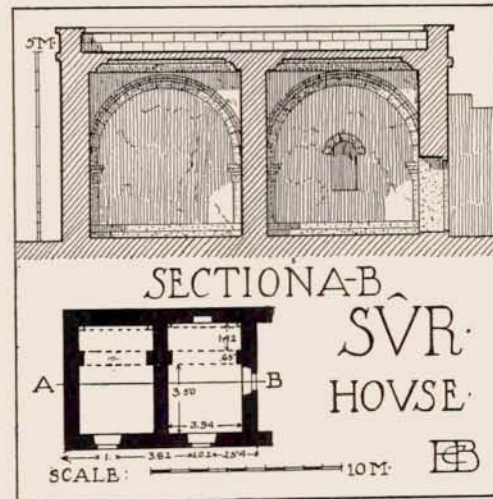
Ill. 371.

to the height of three metres, though it does not project above the masses of fallen stones. One of the niches presented in a scale drawing in Ill. 371, shows unmistakable Nabataean characteristics.

Without elaborate excavations, it would be impossible to determine whether there was a portico in front of the north façade; not excavations in the ordinary sense, for they would consist only in the removal of tons of broken stones. Among the ruins at this point a carved fragment was found at (B), which shows a rather late form of the Nabataean egg-and-dart and an incised ornament consisting of a succession of triangles precisely like that which appears commonly in the Christian ornament of Northern Syria, but which I have never before seen in the South. In making the plan of the peristyle court it was necessary to begin at the end far away from the temple. This court was over 30 m. long and more than 20 m. wide. The western half of its northern wall is standing to a height of 2 m. and the division wall at its northwest angle is also partly preserved. At this angle I was able to find the three steps, like the steps of the *theatron* at Si^c, and the lower parts of the column at the same angle of the peristyle (C, in Ill. 371). The base and lower drum of the next column toward the south were also in place, and a portion of the second column from the angle toward the east. One jamb of the north portal of the court appears to be in place. With these data, and with suggestions made by broken columns strewn among the ruins on both sides of the court, I was able to reconstruct the plan of the peristyle, which is not unlike that in front of the Temple of Ba'al Shamīn at Si^c, which was called the *theatron*. The determination of the west side of the peristyle and steps was marked by a rectangular structure which exists in walls about a metre high, and which has a half-column engaged at its northwest angle as a respond to the south colonnade of the peristyle. The structure I have reproduced on the other side, assuming a symmetrical arrangement. The bases and capitals of the columns are not unlike similar features found at Si^c and other Nabataean sites. A charming little pedestal was found at point (D), and is represented in Ill. 371. It is impossible, in the present condition of the ruins, to discover the plan or the purpose of the buildings, over ten metres deep, which flanked the peristyle court. These portions of the sacred enclosure are filled with the ruins of houses of a much poorer and later date than the temenos itself, and seem to have been inhabited in early Christian times, if not during the Moslem period as well. Much of the destruction here seems to have been intentional, as was the case at Si^c, but we can only conjecture as to the time when the destruction began.

HOUSES. Among the ruins of the ancient town there are extensive remains of private houses of many different classes; but, owing to the numerous rebuildings in later times, not one of them is sufficiently well preserved to give us a complete plan. On the western side of the ruins there are scant remains of houses, which were far above the ordinary from the standpoint of design and execution, and which resemble, in these particulars, some of the residences in the neighbourhood of Boṣrā, which I have called villas. To illustrate this class I have chosen two rooms (Ill. 372), which are pretty well preserved, at the end of a long row of apartments, the remainder of which are in complete ruins. These rooms are small, but their walls are constructed in the best masonry of Southern Syria; both are oblong and are spanned near the end opposite the doorway by a moulded transverse arch carried upon pilasters with richly moulded caps. Beyond the arch the floor is raised upon two steps, and this division of the

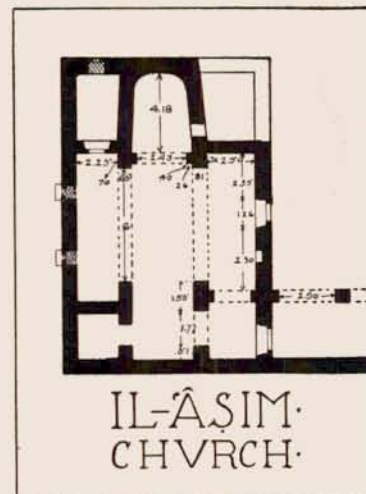
room within the arch is covered by a tunnel vault composed of long slabs resting at one end upon the moulded arch and at the other upon a moulded and arched corbel course. The roof of the outer portion of the room is made up of long and well dressed slabs laid upon a projecting corbel course carved in the form of a salient cyma recta. One of the rooms has an arched rectangular niche in the wall above the raised platform. It is probable that this part of the building originally had two storeys, and that there were larger rooms in the same row spanned by high transverse arches, and only one storey high. The particular type of room represented by the two here illustrated, with its platform and vaulted recess, recalls the more luxurious domestic architecture of Boṣrā and of Inchil, and suggests the Oriental *diwan*.



Ill. 372.

143. IL-^ʿĀṢIM.

To the east of Sûr, on the opposite side of a narrow strip of cultivable soil, and upon a slight eminence, stands this ruin, a distant view of which is very imposing: for its walls rise high and unbroken, and its single tower dominates the surrounding landscape. On closer inspection, however, il-^ʿĀṣim is rather disappointing. The place is deserted, and its buildings have suffered comparatively little change since the sixth or seventh century; but all the architecture is of the poorest quality, and there is not a building, excepting the little Church, which is of the smallest interest. But there are signs that, before the Christian period, this place had some claim to importance. In the middle of the ruins there is a broad flight of fourteen steps very well cut and fitted, and suggesting the approach to a temple. The steps terminate on the right against a wall of highly finished masonry. This wall turns at the foot of the steps and extends to the right about 10 m. There are two windows and a doorway in the wall, which is crowned with a right-lined moulding on the level of the top of the steps. Entering the doorway one finds an oblong room spanned by transverse arches and roofed with slabs which provided a platform to which the steps were the approach. It looks as if we had here the setting of some important structure; but at the top of the steps and on the rest of the platform we found only poor houses of the Christian, or even early Moslem, period. A search among the ruins revealed no details that might have belonged to the Classical or to the Nabataean periods. Of course such details might be brought to light by thorough excavation; but it is not impossible that the platform only provided space for a sacred enclosure to which the fine flight of steps led up. No inscriptions were found which might shed light upon the subject.



Ill. 373.

CHURCH. The plan of the little church (Ill. 373) is not without interest, although as an example of building the edifice would be ranked very low. The nave is nearly square and is divided into three nearly equal aisles by two longitudinal arches. The middle aisle is prolonged toward the west, and is flanked on the north by the base of the tower, and on the south by a square chamber, which opens into the middle aisle and into the end of the south aisle by means of arches. This chamber has a doorway which gives upon an arcade that extends southward from the southeast angle of the church. The church itself has no western portal. At the opposite end of the church we find a curiously shaped apsis which appears in plan as a trapezoid with slightly rounded top. On the north is a side chamber, on the south a narrow doorway which now opens out of doors. There exist no remains of a south side-chamber, and there is no doorway in the end of the south aisle; but I can not but believe that such a chamber formerly existed, or at least was planned. The details of the church are of the simplest, and only the shade stones over the windows on the north side attract attention.

144. DJEDIL.

Djedil is another of the sites which had not been visited before we reached it in 1909. The place stands well, upon a slight eminence, well to the northeast of Sûr, and its ruins cover a large area. The site moreover is an ancient one, for we discovered an inscription¹ of the year 106 A. D.; but it was chosen as one of the chief centres of Arab settlement, and there are ruins of no less than two mosques still to be seen. This later occupation had the usual result of destroying all of the ancient buildings, so that inscriptions were the only records which we were able to gather on this site. Moreover the Arabs whom we found in temporary possession of the place were not inclined to be hospitable, and while large stones shot from slings were falling about us, we decided to move on to less hostile regions.

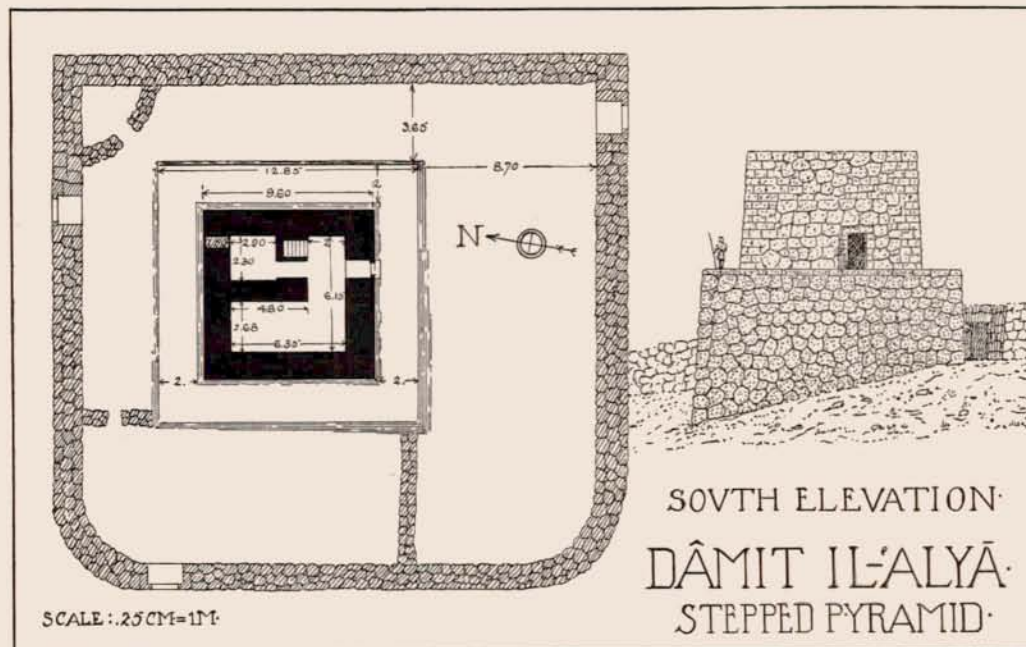
145. DÂMIT IL-^êALYĀ (*Damatha*).

In the heart of the Ledjā, beside the ruins of a very ancient stepped pyramid which serves as a landmark for miles around, is the old town of *Damatha*, now a prosperous Druse village. The present inhabitants live, almost without exception, in ancient dwellings more or less restored and altered to suit present needs. A Mediaeval mosque in the centre of the town is now used as a Druse place of worship. Inscriptions abound, and many other signs of antiquity. The place is one of the most interesting in the Ledjā, and has been visited by explorers from time to time. I reached it on the occasion of a hasty journey across the Ledjā in 1905, when I measured several buildings and copied a number of unpublished inscriptions.

STEPPED PYRAMID. The most ancient building here, without question, is a great tower in the oldest style of construction found in the Haurân, situated in the northern part of the town. It rises in two storeys, or terraces, with inclined sides, to a height of about 15 metres above the lava wave on which it stands (Ills. 374, 375) and is a

¹ Div. III, inscr. 799.

landmark visible from every high point in the Ledjā. It is surrounded by a high, thick, wall. In form and size, this building resembles the two-stepped pyramid at iṣ-Ṣāfiyeh which I have described in these publications¹; but it is somewhat cruder in construction. It was built for the most part of bowlders of large size almost entirely unhewn; but at the angles of the upper stage rudely quadrated stones were used. The two stages of the structure are both well preserved. It is impossible to discover if there was a third storey. It was not difficult to secure a plan of the interior of the upper storey, which is entered by a narrow doorway, but all access to the interior of the lower stage is blocked, even the staircase which descended from the upper stage. The walls of this stage are 1.50 m. thick, and the platform outside of it is 2 m. wide. The great wall which surrounds the building is composed of bowlders and smaller stones. It forms roughly a square (Ill. 374), two angles of which are rounded. The walls are parallel



Ill. 374.

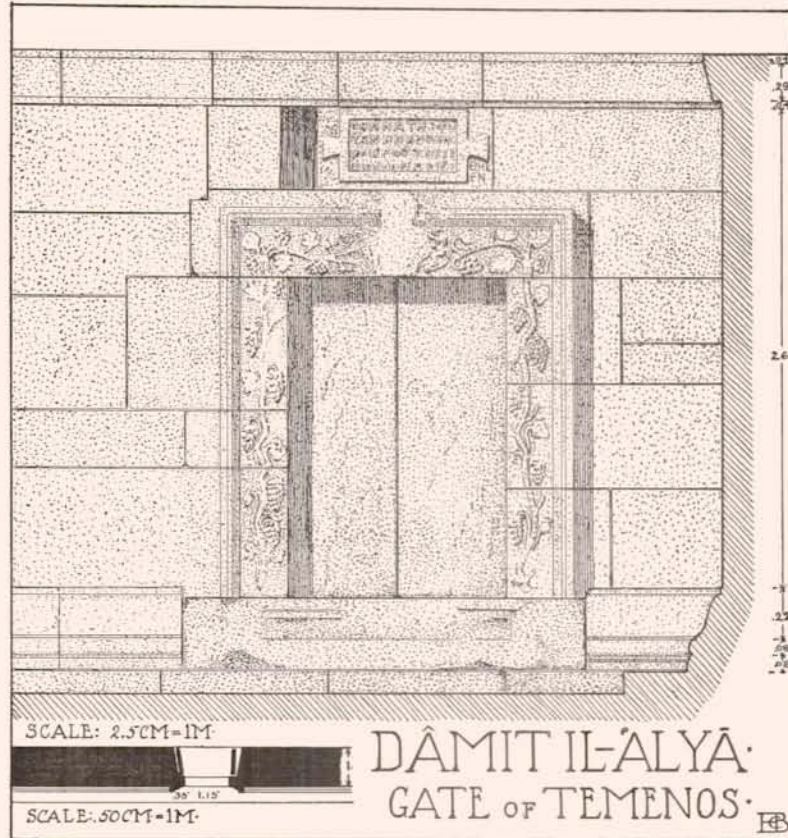
to the sides of the tower, but are set at varying distances from them. There are three entrances in the form of practical doorways, and the outer walls are joined to the tower by connecting walls at two points. The northwest angle of the enclosure is walled off by a curving wall. All of these constructions appear to be of the same date and all are of massive boulder construction. The photograph (Ill. 375) unfortunately confuses the outer wall with the lower stage of the tower. Like other similar structures in Southern Syria, this building gives no clue as to the original purpose for which it was built. I do not believe that it was a tomb, and it is hardly large enough to have been erected for defense. We have examples of watch-towers of all the known architectural periods of Syria, and none of them resembles this. I assume therefore that it was a watch-tower of a much earlier, that is to say a prehistoric, period.

TEMENOS OF ATHENA. About 100 metres to the southeast of the tower is a fine bit of well built wall, about 10 metres long, lying east and west, with a doorway in

¹ II, A, 2, pp. 124, 125.

the middle, in which two stone doors still swing in their places. This section of the wall is almost perfectly preserved, and it is quite plain that the wall formed one side, or part of one side, of a sacred enclosure which, one may infer from the inscription over the gate, was sacred to Athena. The other walls of the temenos can not now be traced, and the space within is occupied by the house, stables, and other out-buildings of a Druse family; but it is evident that the temenos extended as far as the enclosing wall about the stepped pyramid, at its southeast angle. No remains of a temple are

visible. There may have been only a small shrine, or perhaps only an altar; for there is hardly room for a large temple. The wall is about 3.40 m. high and was built of large and well finished blocks of basalt. It has a rich base moulding of Nabataean type and a right-lined cornice. The portal was published by M. Dussaud¹ in 1903, by means of a drawing. I venture to present a photograph of it (Ill. 376) as well as a measured drawing (Ill. 377). The threshold is a high block which originally had two steps with mouldings carved along the edge of the treads and with small carved figures — probably lions like those at Si^c — at their ends. The ornament of the jambs is executed



Ill. 377.

upon the ends of the stones of the wall, for the jambs are not inset monoliths, and is carried across the lintel. This ornament consists of a salient outer moulding and a flat band carved with a heavy, and somewhat realistic, treatment of grape vine executed in the manner of the middle period of the monuments at Si^c. In the middle of the lintel is a rough space showing that a sculptured bust has been intentionally hacked away. The bust probably represented Athena. Above the portal is a Greek inscription in relief letters set in a dovetailed plate also in relief, which informs us that Tanelos son of Moaieros erected the gate for the Lady Athena.

TOMB. East of the tower, or stepped pyramid, and on the same basalt ridge, are the remains of a small building which was either a tomb or a very small shrine. Only the lower courses of the walls are in situ; but many details lying near make restoration an easy task (Ill. 378). The front of the tomb was an arch embracing its entire width,

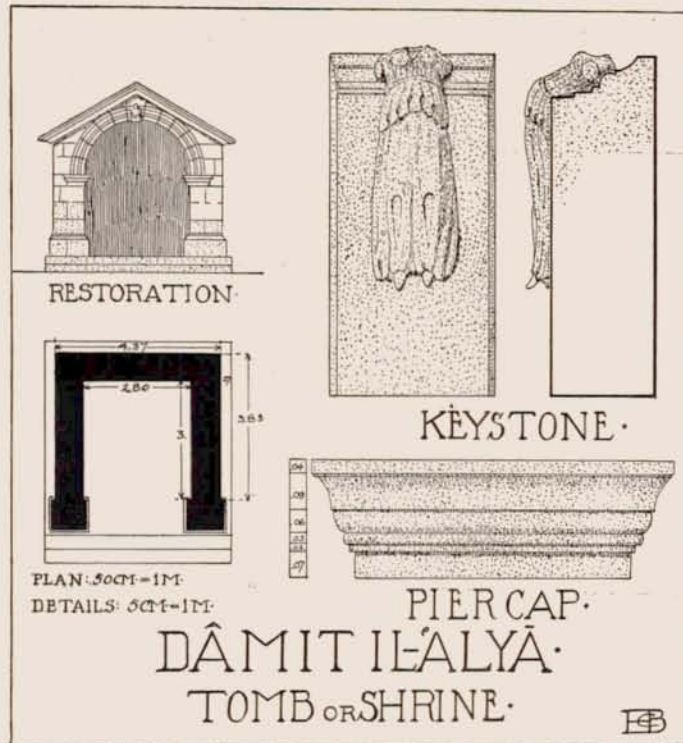
¹ *M. S. M.* p. 18, pl. III.

the other sides were solid walls. The arch and the pier-caps which supported it were moulded, and the keystone was adorned with a sculptured female figure in high relief, the head and bust of which were carved upon the face of the voussoir, while the lower parts of the body and the long draperies were executed upon the soffit. The head and arms are missing, and there are indications that the figure had wings. If this were the case the figure was probably a Nike. The roof of the tomb or shrine was double pitched and was composed of long slabs, the ends of which were moulded to give the appearance of a raking cornice.

CHURCH. Near the centre of the town are the ruins of a small church built entirely of porous basalt in roughly hewn blocks. The north wall is in ruins, and the arches of the interior have been taken out, but the other walls are standing. I published this church in 1906, in connection with an article on the "Plans of Early Churches in Syria",¹ and reproduce here the same illustration (Ill. 379). The plan is oblong, consisting of an undivided nave of three bays with transverse arches and a deeply set semicircular apse between narrow side-chambers in two storeys. A narrow doorway connects the sanctuary with the chamber on the south, which has also an outer doorway marking it as the prothesis. The nave had a western portal and a doorway in the south side of the middle bay. Both interior and exterior are extremely plain; but across the west façade

is a moulding of right-lined profile which is carried in an arch of elliptical shape over the portal in the manner of the arched cornice of the façade of the Kaisariyeh at Shaḡḡā.²

HOUSES. Many of the houses of ancient *Damatha* are inhabited to-day, which means that they have been more or less altered, and that they have been coated over with a sort of stucco made of mud. They are of the ordinary types and are not of importance sufficient to warrant publication. The new walls and court-yards of these houses abound in inscriptions, one of which very plainly gives the ancient name of the town.



Ill. 378.

is a moulding of right-lined profile which is carried in an arch of elliptical shape over the portal in the manner of the arched cornice of the façade of the Kaisariyeh at Shaḡḡā.²

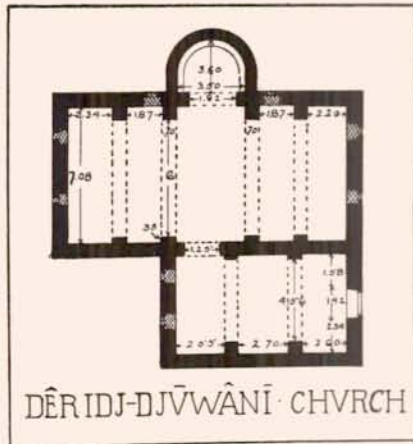


Ill. 379.

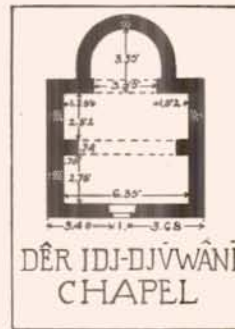
¹ *R. A.* 1906, Juil.—Dec. p. 417.² *A. A. E. S.* II, p. 371.

146. DÊR IDJ-DJÛWÂNĪ,

To the northeast of Dâmit-il-^cAlyā there are rather extensive deserted ruins of a settlement of the Christian period grouped about a small monastery, which gives the place its Arabic name signifying the inner monastery or convent. None of the buildings belongs to the better class if judged by standards of construction; but the church which was attached to the monastery presents a most unusual plan, and is published here-



Ill. 380.

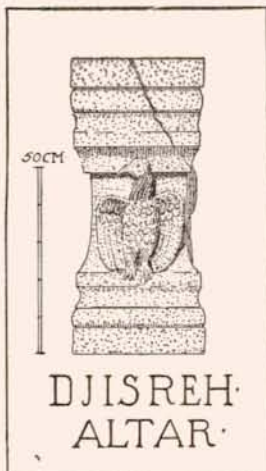


Ill. 381.

with (Ill. 380). The church has the appearance of being an ordinary oblong nave with four transverse arches; but having its apse on one side instead of at the end; for the longer axis of the nave is that which lies north and south. Five bays marked off by four broad arches divide the church into five aisles, as it appears in plan. The middle bay, or aisle, terminates in a semicircular apse 3.50 m. wide with an apse arch

less than 2 m. wide. A semicircular bench extends around the curved wall of the apse. At the west side of the church, extending in front of the end of the middle aisle and of the two side aisles on the south of it, is a wide narthex entirely enclosed. It opens into the middle aisle by an arch, and out of doors by a doorway at its south end. This narthex is spanned by two transverse arches. The whole structure is almost complete with its roofing-slabs all in place; but it was very crudely built and has been divided up by crude, light, walls; for it now serves as a sheep-fold and a shed for cattle.

On higher ground to the east stands a small chapel of square plan (Ill. 381) having a single transverse arch and a comparatively large projecting apse. Only the slabs of the roof are lacking to make this a complete structure. The half dome of the apse which is built of roughly dressed blocks of stone of small size set in mortar, is perfectly preserved, and is a rare example of this kind of construction.



Ill. 382.

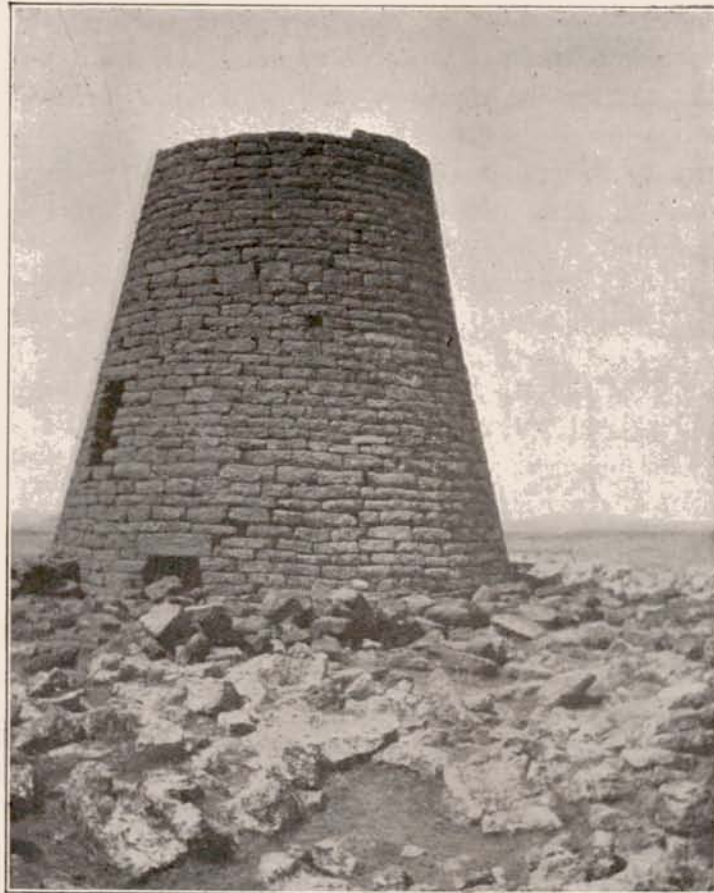
147. DJISREH.

At the place of this name there is only a small group of poorly built ancient buildings, mostly houses of the Christian period, and all in a state of ruin. There are inhabitants, but some of the houses have been utilized quite recently as sheep-folds. Among the uninteresting architectural remains was found the little altar which is published herewith in a scale drawing showing one side (Ill. 382), and by a photograph (Ill. 383) of the other. Two adjoining sides of the altar bear sculpture of crude character in high relief. On one side is the figure of an eagle treated in a manner unlike that of any of the figures of this sort known in the Ḥaurân; on the other is the bust

of a man executed in a most primitive style. These sculptures are not in keeping with the mouldings of the base and cap of the altar, which have good profiles, and are carefully wrought.



Ill. 383. Djisreh, Altar.



Ill. 384. Tower on the Road to Khabeb.

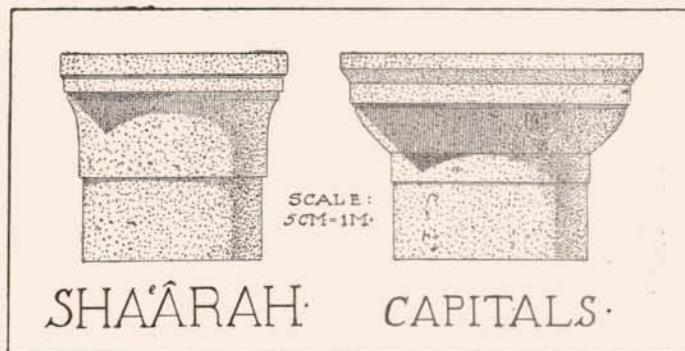
148. ZUBAIYIR. 149. ZEBÎR.

These are two deserted ruins situated a little to the west of north from Sûr. They stand on two slight elevations separated by less than a mile. Both present rather inspiring pictures when viewed from a distance, because high walls and tower-like structures rise above the general mass of the ruins in strong silhouette against the sky. But, here again, as in the case of so many ruined towns in the region, a closer examination is disappointing. Both places are occupied now by Bedawin encampments, and we found the Arabs here not only suspicious but rather hostile. We visited Zubaiyir, and examined it carefully; but had to be content with observing the other ruin with field glasses owing to the hostility of the Arabs. Both sites, being near Khabeb at the edge of the Ledjā, have been visited by numerous explorers; but nothing of importance has been reported from either of them. We found Zubaiyir quite uninteresting, consisting of houses of the Christian period and of the poorer class. At Zebîr M. Dussaud saw a quadrangular fortress which he believed to be of Arab construction. Between Zebîr and Khabeb we passed two ancient round towers with sloping sides. One of these, which is well preserved, is shown in the accompanying photograph (Ill. 384). This tower has an entrance on the ground level and another large opening, like a doorway, about

four metres above the ground. It is impossible to assign a date or purpose to these buildings. It may be that they are of Mediaeval origin, but their stonework is far better than most of the early Arab work in this region. They were almost certainly not tomb-towers. It has been suggested that they were originally wind-mills which might account for the doorway high above the ground. One naturally classes them with the watch-towers which abound among the ancient ruins of Syria; but I have never seen any of the towers of this kind with sloping sides. The tower shown in the photograph may be compared with that published in an earlier Part of these publications, found in the Djebel Haurân¹.

150. SHA'ĀRAH.

On the road northward from Sūr to Sha'ārah, along the western edge of the Ledjā, we passed through several small and unimportant ruins which are given on the map, and which should be mentioned briefly here. The first of these is Mlêḥah, a much dilapidated ruin of the Christian period, offering neither inscriptions nor architectural features of any interest. The second, 'Aib, is a very small ruin among trees and undergrowth quite heavy for the region. The third is Krêm, a small village of the



Ill. 385.

Christian period, in which the poorly built houses are still quite well preserved and in occasional use as shelters for cattle. Kastal Krêm, a little to the southeast, and on higher ground, appears to have been nothing more than a look-out with a square tower now in complete ruins. Kal'at Esm'ā, situated on the rim of the Ledjā and near one of the partly artificial entrances to the lava fields,

consists of a low, broad, ruined tower, built undoubtedly as a look-out, and a group of houses of the poorest class. Sha'ārah is a ruin of considerable extent and interest, situated within the edge of the Ledjā just below its northwest angle. It is inhabited by a small number of settled Bedawin. The ruins give evidence that the town was one of importance in Roman and early Christian times, and that it was one of the more important local centres of Moslem activity in the Middle Ages. Capitals are to be seen here (Ill. 385) which resemble Nabataean details; there are paved streets, and remains of colonnades which lined them, as well as baths and fragmentary details of temples of the Roman period. The Christian period is represented by houses and two towers; and the Moslem, by two mosques, one of which is comparatively well preserved. On the west side of the ruins is a large arched building with its roof intact, which the natives call a khan. It was not improbably built for just such a purpose. The building belongs to one of the earlier periods. It is now often employed for the stabling of animals, and this fact may account for the present Arabic name of the town, which signifies stables. Few of the more ancient buildings, excepting the baths, are well preserved. Although fragments of temple archi-

¹ Div. II, Sect. A, Part 5, p. 354.

that separate baths may have been provided for the sexes. There is little doubt, judging from the stone cutting and the methods of construction employed, that the baths were erected in the second or third century after Christ.

151. MISMÎYEH (*Phaena*).

The ancient city of *Phaena* which commanded the northern end of the Ledjā retains hardly a remnant of its former beauty. It is now occupied by large Turkish barracks, in the building of which the old buildings were preyed upon for material and were removed even to their foundations. Only a few poor houses on the outskirts of the town remain to suggest that the place was the site of an ancient city. No vestige remains of the interesting Praetorium, built under Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus between 160 and 169 A. D., and published by M. de Vogüé¹ and M. Rey.² Near its original position lie three fragments of sculpture, published in drawings by M. Dussaud,³ which are interesting to compare with some sculptures found at Saḥr and published herewith below.

ROMAN ROAD. The subject of the Roman road which crossed the Ledjā presents itself once more at Mismîyeh; for this place was the starting-point of its course across the lava fields. This ancient road is given upon all the maps of the region, beginning with the one first made by Wetzstein, and is always described as part of the highway from Damascus to Boşrā. The map presented herewith gives the road substantially the same course as Wetzstein's map, i. e. from Mismîyeh to Mdjêdil to Brêkeh. Waddington⁴, who saw the road, describes it as passing a short distance to the east of il-^cAhreh. We found well preserved sections of the road at Mdjêdil, about four miles to the northeast of il-^cAhreh, as described on page 416; but did not encounter it nearer il-^cAhreh. We crossed it between Hammân and Tubbeh at a point southeast of Mismîyeh, and saw a few fragments of it near Brêkeh. It is therefore quite plain that a Roman road crossed the Ledjā from northwest to southeast, turning due south at Mdjêdil. But the question as to whether this was a part of the main Damascus-Boşrā road is another matter. We saw indisputable remains of an ancient road west of Slêm, and north and south of Suwêdā, which are probably parts of this Ledjā road extending toward Boşrā. Farther south this road is easily traced near ʿIreh, as far as the bridge over the Wadi Zêdî just above Boşrā. But this is not the only road leading out of Boşrā to the north. The road which passes over the bridge at Kharaba was traced by following ancient remains for several hundred yards to the northwest. It seems probable that this road passed around the southwest angle of the Ledjā and then turned northward toward Damascus. The route through the Ledjā was of course the shorter one, and would be a far more direct road from Damascus to Kanawât, Shaḳḳā, and other important Roman towns in the Djebel Ḥaurân. It is quite possible that the Ledjā road belongs to a later period of Roman road building, and that it was built to afford a direct approach to Philippopolis, when the Arab Emperor was converting a small mountain village into a Roman city.

152. ṬAFF.

Near the middle of the north end of the Ledjā, and at some distance within the lava fields, is the small ruin of this name. It consists of a small group of poorly

¹ *S. C.*, p. 45, Pl. VII.

² *Voyage dans le Hauran* etc. Pl. III.

³ *M. S. M.*, p. 13.

⁴ *Wadd.*, 2438.

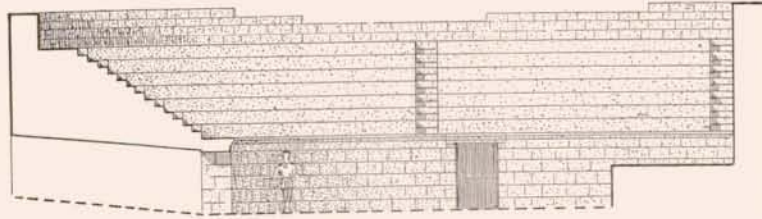
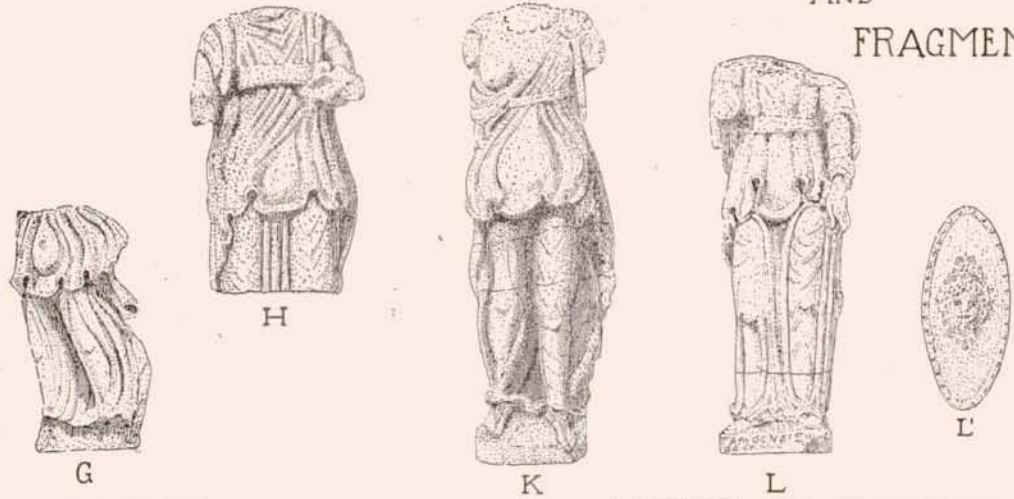
constructed houses of the Christian period standing beside a ruined Arab *weli* or shrine. The buildings are of small importance, though some of them are well preserved. We found the place inhabited by a group of insane and half-witted Arabs, who, as our guide told us, had been left here by the migrating tribes.

153. SAḤR.

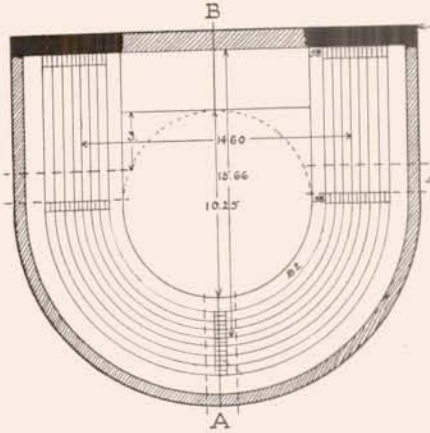
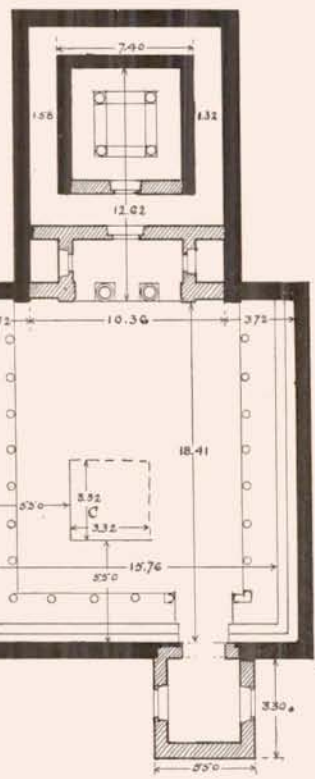
This place is situated not far from the edge of the Ledjā near its northeastern angle. It might easily be reached from the plain; but we came upon the ruins in the course of a journey of exploration, while searching for ancient sites in this part of the lava fields. The ruins at Saḥr are not those of a town but of a Pagan religious site. They consist of the remains of a temple of Nabataean plan and a small theatre. The temple has been completely destroyed, perhaps in Christian times, for the building of the towns just outside the northern and eastern edge of the Ledjā; but the theatre is quite well preserved. There are very few ruins of other buildings, and none that appear to belong to the Christian period. It seems probable that Saḥr has been abandoned since the fourth or fifth century, and it is a great pity that its proximity to towns which flourished at a later period has caused its destruction; for, if this had not been the case, we should have had here a more nearly complete example of a Nabataean temple. This is all the more to be regretted in view of the complete destruction of the Nabataean temples at Si^c and at Sūr.

TEMPLE. The ruins of the temple with its fore-court compose a broad field of broken building-stones. At no point are the walls standing over a metre above the level of the ground, and in the plan (Ill. 387) which is herewith presented I have been obliged to depart from my usual scheme of representing in solid black only such walls as are standing over two metres high, and have shown all walls which preserve a metre or more of their original height in black, shading in only foundations. The ground plan immediately suggests that of the Temple of Ba^cal Shamīn at Si^c. The walls that preserve a metre of their height leave no doubt of this general plan, i. e. the inner and the outer temple and the enclosed fore-court. The foundation of the front wall of the inner chamber shows that this part was nearly square, and there are drums of columns lying in the heap of broken stones within the chamber which make quite certain the restoration of four columns at the angles of a square inside the chamber. The outer walls of the temple form a narrow aisle at the rear and sides of the inner chamber, and the side walls are carried well beyond the square to join the walls of the fore-court; but foundations show that the narrow aisle extended across the front of the inner chamber describing an outer square. It is very difficult to study this part of the temple, which is deeply buried in débris; but I feel confident that the restoration of the plan of the portico with flanking chambers here presented is correct. I could see the foundations of the walls of these two chambers and the thresholds of the doorways by peering down among the ruins, but was unable to measure them. Fragments of column-drums lying near suggested the distyle porch like that of the Temple of Ba^cal Shamīn at Si^c. The fore-court is wider than the temple. On all sides of it, with the exception of the side on which the temple fronts, two stepped seats like those in the fore-courts of the temples at Si^c and Sūr, are to be seen, placed directly against the wall. Broken columns of small diameter suggest the former presence of a colonnade carrying a roof over the

SAHR · TEMPLE · THEATRE · AND FRAGMENTS ·



SECTION A-B



SCALE OF PLANS
10M

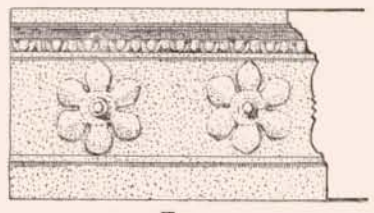


E



D

SCALE OF DETAILS
50 CM



F



EB

seats. The entrance to the fore-court was not on axis with the temple, but well to the west of the main north and south axis. Before the entrance was a square vestibule entered from both sides, but not from the front. This vestibule seems to have been carried up in an upper storey like a tower. It exists now only in foundations and heaps of broken building-stones. It is strange that no considerable fragments of architectural detail belonging to the temple could be found upon the site. It almost seems as if the carved ornament had been purposely destroyed or carried away. A few small bits are all the evidence available that the ornament here was similar to that of the Nabataean buildings. Out in the court a fragment of an architrave (F. in Ill. 387) was found without any clue as to where it belonged. It combines both Nabataean and Roman elements of ornament. In the foundations of the small chamber on the left of the porch of the temple, lay a fragment of a door in black basalt (E. in Ill. 387). It is the lower left hand angle of a door, showing the ball of a ball-and-socket hinge and a piece of one panel, with parts of its frame studded with large nail-heads executed in the stone. The panel is carved with a nude male figure in high relief. The door must have been at least two panels wide, and would thus have been over a metre in width. If it were two panels high, the doorway would have been about 1.40 m. in height; if three panels high, 2.10 m. in height. It probably belonged to the doorway of a chamber in which it was found, and was certainly one of the most elaborate stone doors in Syria. It is particularly interesting, as being almost without question an imitation of a bronze door, and as showing that the relief in ancient doors of bronze was quite as high as that of the reliefs in certain well known doors of the Renaissance period.

SCULPTURES. There are far more fragments of sculpture than of carved architectural details lying in the ruins of the temple and in the fore-court; but most of these have been defaced beyond recognition. Fragment D, found directly in front of the temple (Ills. 387, 388), is a well preserved head of Medusa in low relief, which probably belonged to the ornament of the pediment above the porch. Within the fore-court, a little to the northeast of the middle of the enclosed square, are the remains of a platform, 3.32 m. square and about 1 m. high, upon and around which are quantities of broken bits of sculpture. The platform was apparently a sort of pedestal for a group of statues. Fragments of the bodies of sculptured horses and pieces of a chariot-wheel in basalt suggest a quadriga or a biga. But there are other broken statues lying about which may or may not have belonged to the group. Most of them are of life size. In Ill. 387 I have given drawings to scale of such of these sculptures as preserve some of their character, and in Ill. 388 photographs of them are shown. Fragment G is the lower half of a female figure, about half life-size, with draperies flowing in the wind like those of a flying Victory. H is a life-size torso, from neck to knees, of a portly male figure completely draped in an upper and a lower garment represented as soft stuff belted at the waist by a heavy band. K is made up of three fragments which I have pieced together in my drawing. The three pieces compose the entire figure, excepting the head and arms, of a life-size female figure, probably a Nike. Breaks in the stone behind the shoulders indicate that the figure was winged. The three fragments fit together very well, but the uppermost is so heavy that I could not have it lifted into its place for photographic purposes. The lowest fragment includes the base, the feet and legs to a point above the knees, and the lower draperies. The small middle fragment



Fragment D.



Fragment E.



Fragment G.



Fragment H.



Fragments K.



Fragments L.

composes the thighs and some drapery, the uppermost fragment is the complete torso. The upper drapery falls from a buckle on the left shoulder leaving the right breast bare, and is loosely belted at the waist. There is a necklace hanging loosely about the neck, and the belt is studded probably to represent jewels. The upper drapery, the himation, below the belt parts in flying folds, not unlike trumpet folds, on either side of the abdomen, falling to the upper part of the thighs; the under drapery falls to the feet, is thrown back against the limbs, and is carried as if by the wind, in long sweeping folds backward from beside the limbs. Much of this heavy fold drapery has been broken away. The composition is spirited and has every appearance of being copied from some great work of art. It probably belongs to the early years of the second century after Christ. The execution is remarkably good when one considers the difficulties of working such a material as basalt. L is a draped male figure in two fragments. Only the head and shoulders and the right forearm are missing. Here again we find an upper and a nether garment, but in this figure the drapery is heavier than that seen in H and falls in straighter folds. The figure stands erect upon both feet in soldierly attitude. The left hand rests easily upon a shield, the right, which was extended forward, probably held a spear. The sleeved tunic is belted at the waist by a broad band and falls to the thighs in front in even folds with a heavy hem at the bottom, and to the knees behind. Over the tunic was a mantle which fell from the neck, parting over the chest and draping itself over both arms as far as the elbows. The lower drapery is very stiffly treated. The thighs are outlined in the drapery by means of thin sharp folds, the knees are over emphasized, and the feet barely show. The front of the oval shield is given a nail-studded rim, and is ornamented in the middle with the Medusa head in low relief. This figure does not compare favourably with H in style or composition or execution. It is manifestly by a different hand and probably belongs to a different epoch. The base of this statue bears a brief inscription in Greek; but I would assign the statue to the Nabataean period of the first century after Christ.

THEATRE. The diminutive theatre is situated just beside the fore-court of the temple, on the east, or left, side as one faces the temple, and only 15.80 m. from it, facing south. It is only 20 m. in diameter with an orchestra of 10.25 m. in diameter. The semicircle of the orchestra, if drawn to a complete circle, is exactly tangent to the front of the stage wall. The semicircle of seats is prolonged in straight lines on either side, to a distance of 8.60 m., to the straight wall which forms the back of the stage. The stage is in a ruined condition, so that it is impossible to determine its original height, and the orchestra is so filled with débris of broken stone that its floor level could not be found. The orchestra is surrounded by a wall at least 2 m. high, above which is a narrow walk only 82 cm. wide. Above this rise the seven rows of seats, each 38 cm. high and 50 cm. deep, with another passage at the top. The seats are intersected by three flights of stairs, one on the major axis and two on the diameter; and there are two more flights of steps at the termination of the seats against the back wall. The orchestra was reached from the outside by three passages below the seats, one on the main axis and one on either side just below the diameter. I was unable to discover the means of communication between the orchestra and the cavea, or tiers of seats, or any approach from the outside to the seats of the theatre; but it is probable that steps ascended in the thickness of the wall, breaking through the tiers of seats. So far as could be discovered, there was no stage building in the ordinary sense: the seats extended

along beside the stage in an unusual manner. Thus there were no *paraskenai*, or wings, and it is difficult to conjecture how plays could have been presented here. The stage is nothing but a speaking platform, and the theatre may have been used in connexion with temple rites rather than for the acting of plays. But the theatre form of building in this remote place is interesting in any connexion. There are few theatres in the Ḥaurân, and these are all found in the more important centres of population like Boşrâ, Ḳanawât, and Shaḳḳâ. In fact the three just mentioned are the only theatres that were known in this entire basaltic region before the discovery of this little theatre at Saḥr.

154. HAMMÂN.

It is very difficult to reach this place, which lies well to the southwest of Saḥr in the almost impenetrable part of the lava waste. The town is entirely deserted, and as a result the buildings are very well preserved, but the architecture is of the poorest quality. The only remains are those of private houses, all of which are small and poorly built of blocks of porous basalt with the minimum of cutting. Even the lintels and jambs of the doorways are often almost unhewn. The ancient town however, is not without attractions; for grass grows plentifully in the cleared places about the houses, and several large *buṭm* trees cast a welcome shade, while lending picturesqueness to the ruins.

155. TUBBEH.

In making the journey from Hammân to Tubbeh we crossed a well preserved section of the Roman road, lying northwest and southeast, which leads across the Ledjâ from Mismîyeh. Tubbeh is situated due south of Mismîyeh. It is a disappointing ruin of the poorer class of houses built in the Christian period.

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¹ Note: A, III and A, IV indicate the Publications of the American Expedition; P, III and P, IV indicate respectively the Greek and Nabataean Divisions of the Publications of the Princeton Expeditions.

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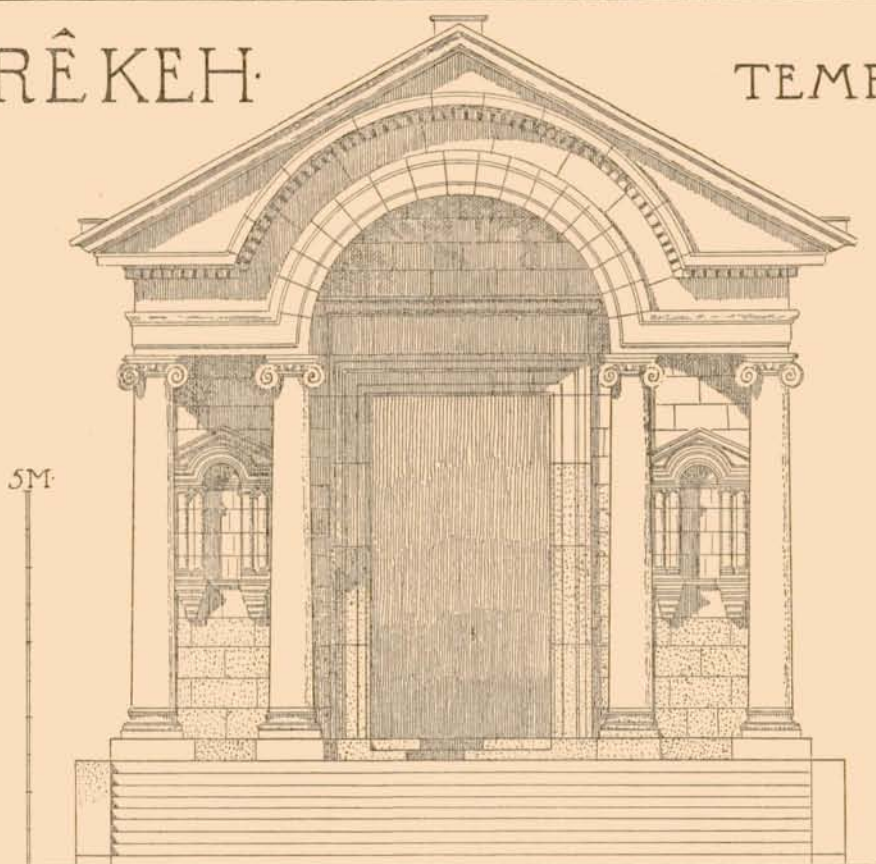
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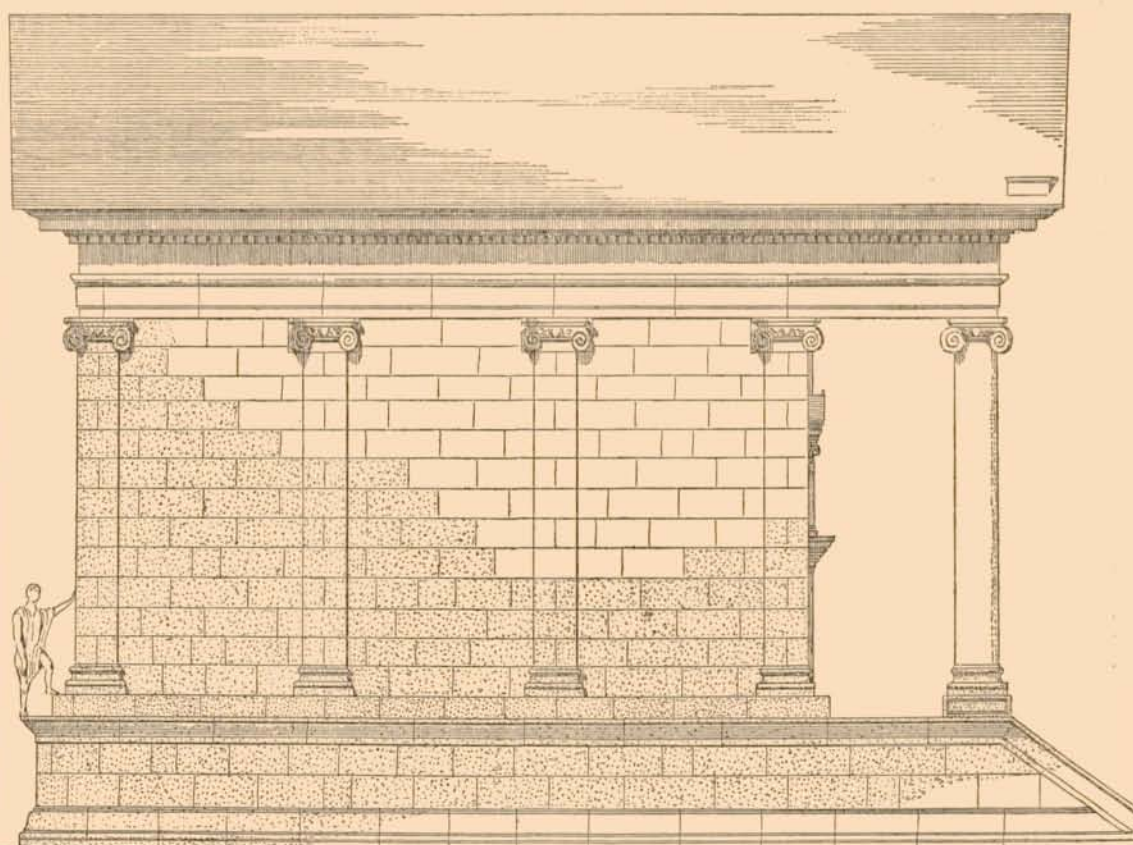
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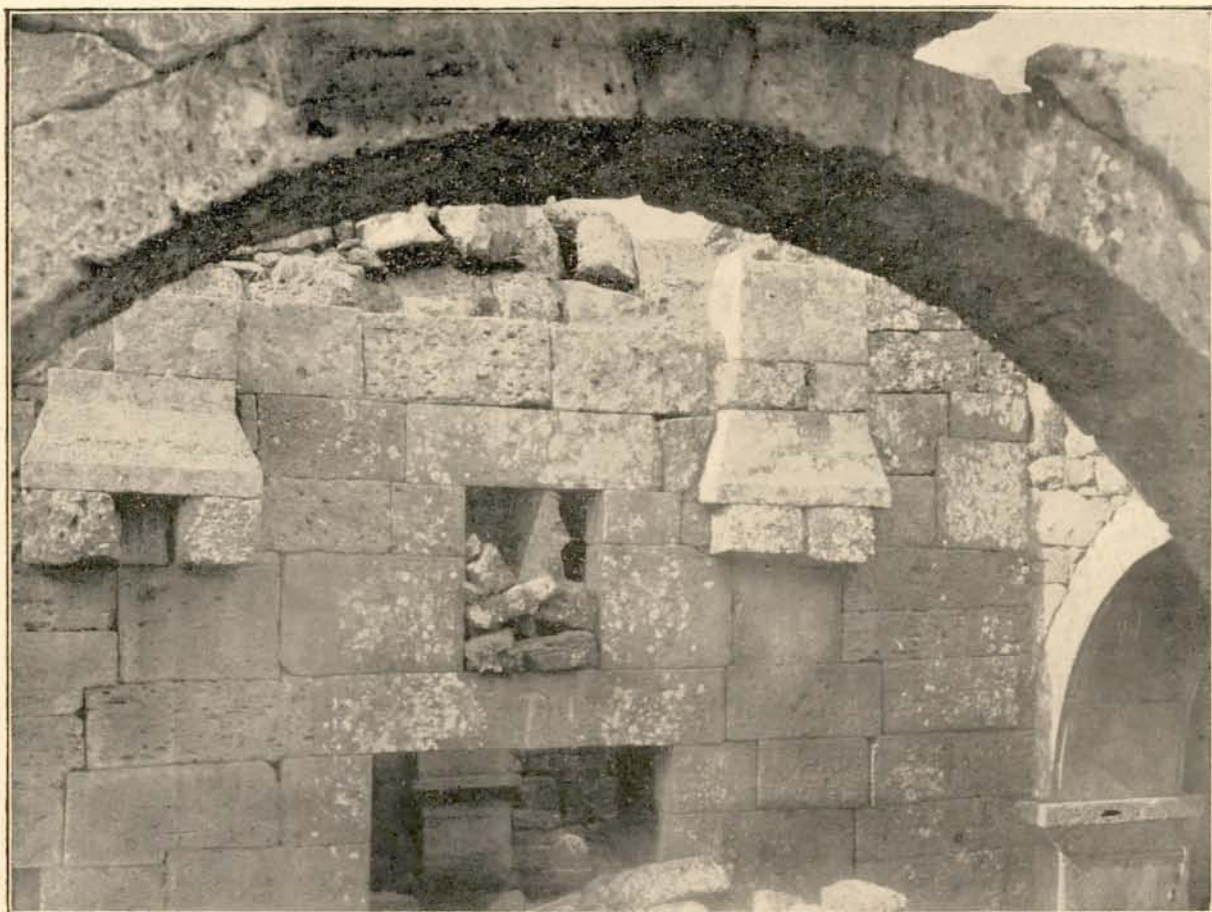


SOUTH ELEVATION.

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Ill. 367. Msékeh. Interior of Olong Building.



Ill. 368. Msékeh. Oblong Building, view from the South.



Ill. 359. Lubbèn. Interior of Church, looking East.



Ill. 360. Lubbèn. Buildings South of Church, View from the East.



Ill. 375. Dâmit il-ʿAlyā. Stepped Pyramid, View from the Southwest



Ill. 376. Dâmit il-ʿAlyā. Gate of Temenos.