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High Places
of
Pebra

Col. Fox. H.N. Irwin.
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Petra .

Historical and descriptive thesis

by

Arthur Pearson Scott .

1906

Authorities.

Original sources.

Literary.

Herodotus Siculus, 2:48-50; 3:42-43; 19:95-99.

Josephus, 16:777,778.

Strabo, Periplus.

Josephus, passim (cf. refs. in text)

or scattered references in Suidas etc. quoted in text.

Coins.

Inscriptions.

Phoenician-Semitic Inscriptions, Cooke.

Arabische Inschriften, Futing.

Other Authorities.

A very complete Bibliography see Schurer, "The Jewish People in the time

of Jesus Christ," Part I, vol. 2: 345.

Schurer gives also a summary of the history of the Nabatean Kings.

Abel, "Geschichte der Edomiter."

Semitic Religion, Robertson Smith, "Religion of the Semites."

The ruins of Petra, Brunnow, Die Provincia Arabia, I.

Deby and Hoskins, "The Jordan Valley and Petra," III.

Anderson's "Biblical Researches", II, 128ff.

Deby, Doughty and others also describe the ruins.

The High Places: cf refs. p. 52.

I am indebted to Prof. George L. Robinson for the plans of the High Places
with permission to consult material in his possession,

The description of the ruins given in the dissertation is based on personal
observation during a five days stay in Wady Moussa, July 1906, with a group of
Professors and Instructors from the Syrian Protestant College, Beirut, Syria.

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Petra.

Between the Dead Sea and the Gulf of Akaba, lies the region known in early times as Mount Seir, or Edom, and later as Arabia Petrea. Much of this region is practically a desert. But there are occasional fertile spots, in the valleys; and the winter rains cause enough herbage to spring up to furnish pasturage during part of the year. Just enough crops can be raised to supplement the nomad fare of milk and flesh.

From time immemorial the dwellers in this territory have led a wandering life; but there exists one spot suited by nature for a fixed abode, the valley now called Wady Mousa. This was the site of the city of Petra, the capital of the nabateans, the center of a widely extended kingdom, the seat of a highly developed civilization. The object of this dissertation is to trace the history of Petra, and to outline so far as possible the main features of its civilization.

Long before Wady Mousa was the site of a city, long before the Nabateans came there, we have good reason to believe it was a central stronghold, and less also a sanctuary, for the inhabitants of the whole region. To understand the history of Petra, it is necessary to get its position clearly in mind.

"Under the cretaceous rocks of the plateau of Edom, Moab, and Ammon is a thick layer of azoic sandstone. Wherever the streams which cut the edge of the great plateau from East to West into deep valleys and sometimes canyons, have exposed the rocks to a sufficient depth, this layer of sandstone is found in places, overlying porphyry and igneous rocks. At Petra and other places, the sandstone layer is several hundred feet in thickness; and for a number of miles north and south of the city a mass about a mile in breadth has been separated from the adjacent table-land by erosion, and almost entirely denuded of its superjacent limestone. A torrent from the plateau, flowing between it and the sandstone mass, has cut its way through the latter from east to west forming a canyon from 12 to 30 feet wide, with ~~pendent~~ *petra petra* or overhanging walls from 200 to 400 feet high" . "

From a paper on Petra by Prof. G.E. Post, of the S.E. College .

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In the center of the mass is a trapezoidal space, with an area of say half a square mile, and on the other side of this valley the stream escapes through another gorge to the Arabah below.

The two prime requisites of an early stronghold were defensibility and a good water supply, and these were combined to a very unusual degree in Wady Mousa. In the first place, an enemy in attacking it was forced to traverse a waterless desert for many miles before getting an opportunity to strike a blow. Then on arriving the approaches to the valley were difficult to force. The eastern approach through the gorge now called the Sik, could be held by a handful of defenders. And while there were other, and easier, ways into the city in the north-east and south-west, they also could have been well defended. There are no signs of a wall surrounding the town- Strabo says of the nabateans, " Their cities are without walls for they dwell in peace, -" and their chief protection has always been the friendly desert.

The water supply of the valley is good. The stream flows through the valley for the greater part of the year. Besides, there are several springs, and cisterns were easy to construct. (Cf. p. 46.) Comparitively late Arab tradition makes this valley the scene of the smiting of the rock by Moses; the Sik is the cleft made by his rod. Hence the name 'Ain Mousa, Moses' Spring, (strating outside the valeey, cf. map,) and Wady Mousa, "Moses' Valley.

Naturally enough, then, this spot has always been a valuable stronghold, and we may be sure that from the earliest times it was an important central point for the inhabitants of the whole territory around.

Early History.

The earliest inhabitants of this general territory of whom we have any tradition were the Horites, spoken of in Gen. 14:6 as dwelling in their Mt. Seir. Mt. Seir is the general name of the range that extends from the Gulf of Akaba northwards toward the Dead Sea. If it be true that "Horites" signifies "cave-dwellers" the name is appropriate for the dwellers in such a region, for besides the natural caves in the rock, it was comparatively easy to excavate others, as the tremendous rock-cuttings at Petra in later times, show. °

About the Horites practically nothing certain is known. Whether they were Canaanites, or of an earlier stock, it is impossible to say.

In Dt. 2:12,22, we have the tradition that the Edomites had dispossessed the Horites at some period before the Exodus. (13th cent B.C.?) * ✓

° Probably however none of the present excavations at Petra were used as dwellings. Cf. Robinson, II 141.

* Josephus says, (Ant 4:7, 4:4) "The Midianites assembled their army (to resist the Israelites,) and an immense number of the Midianites fell; among whom were their five kings, Evi, Zur, Reba, Hur, and Recem; the latter of whom was of the same name with the capital city of all Arabia, which is till now so called by the whole Arabian nation, Arekem, from the name of the king that built it; but is by the Greeks called Petra." Robinson thinks (II 521) "this seems somewhat doubtful; for the Targums of Onkelos and Pseudo-Jonathan apply the name of Recem to Kadesh." Still, it seems strange that Josephus, who speaks so intimately of the affairs of Petra, should be wrong in saying that the native name of Petra in his day was Arekem—though of course his derivation need not be accepted. It might be noted in this connection that Dean Stanley's proposed identification of Petra and Kadesh is now generally discredited.

We hear nothing further till the time of Saul, when we learn(II Sam.14:47) that he fought with the Edomites. Later we have the account, (II Sam. 8:13) of David's victory over the Edomites in the valley of Salt, and of his putting a garrison in Edom. " For Joab and all Israel remained there six months, until he had cut off every male in Edom." (I. K. 11:16.) This was some years before 1000 B.C.

Solomon kept control of the country, sending his ships to Ophir, for gold , starting from the port of Ezion-Geber, on the Gulf of Akaba. He had constant trouble however with a certain " Hadad, of the King's seed, in Edom."(I K. 11:14-18) Till about 850 the Edomites seem to have been subject to the Kings of Judah. But in the reign of Jehoram, they revolted successfully and made Kings of their own. " The Jehoram passed over with his captains, and all his chariots with him; and he smote the Edomites that compassed him about, and the captains of the chariots. So Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah until this day." II Ch 21:6 This latter statement does not seem to take account of the period under Amaziah when Edom was reconquered. " Amaziah slew of Edom in the Valley of Salt ten thousand, and took Sela by war, and called the name of it Joktheel, unto this day." (II K. 14:7) " And Amaziah took courage, and led forth his people, and went to the Valley of Salt, and smote of the Children of Seir ten thousand, And other ten thousand did the Children of Judah carry away alive, and brought them unto the top of the rock(Sela) and cast them down from the top of the rock, so that they were all broken in pieces. Now it came to pass that after Amaziah was come from the slaughter of the Edomites, that he brought the gods of the Children of Seir, and set them up to be his gods, and bowed down himself before them, and burned incense unto them " (II Ch. 25:11-14.)

The succeeding King, Uzziah, " built Elath and restored it unto Judah" .

The conquest was not permanent, however. In the days of Ahaz(c. 735) the Edom-
Babyl (Josh. Edomites) does not think this means Petra. nor does he believe Petra to be mentioned at all in the O.T. of J. Q. A. Smith, Jerusalem vol I, 116.-

ites" came and smote Judah and carried away captives," (IICh 28:16.) At the same period, Resin, King of Syria, recovered Elath to Syria, and drove the Jews from Elath and the Edomites, (margin,) came to Elath and dwelt there unto this day. (IIC 16:6)

The relations of the Israelites and the Edomites was never friendly. The story of Jacob and Esau, from whom the nations traced their lineage, shows how deep-rooted was the antipathy, conceived of as going back to the beginning. In vain was it written (Dt. 23:7) " Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite, for he is thy brother." Even the prophets were bitter in their denunciations of the Edomites. (Is. 34; Jer. 25:21; 49:7; Ez. 25:13; 25:35; Amos 1:11; Obad. 1. etc.)

When the inhabitants of Judah were carried away into the Babylonian captivity, the Edomites promptly pushed northwards to occupy their land. (Obad.1:13) They rejoiced at the downfall of their old enemies all the more as it gave them a chance to get a more fertile territory. ^{In the absence of more definite evidence, it is at this general period that we must put the incursion of a new people into this region of Mt. Seir, namely the Nabateans.}

Early History of the Nabateans.

The origin of this people is not at all clear. Nebaioth is mentioned (Gen 25:13) as the first-born of Ishmael, and the progenitor of a tribe. In Is. 60:7 the Nebaioth are mentioned as a pastoral people; and as before, Kedar is mentioned also.

* Strabo says, " The Idumaeans (=Edomites) are Nabateans; but being driven out by an uprising, they joined themselves to the Jews." It may be that the Edomites moved north under pressure from the Nabateans, as well as for the purpose of occupying southern Judaea. It does not seem possible however that the Edomites and the Nabateans were the same people.

In the Assyrian records a tribe of Na-ba-ai-ti are mentioned along with others, again including the Kid-ra-ai. (Rassam Cylinder.) Pliny mentions the Nabataei and the Cedrei together. (Hist.Nat. v 12).

The first impulse is to connect the names Nebaioth, Na-ba-ai-ti, and the Nabateans of classical times. Josephus says (Ant. I 12) " Of this wife were born to Ishmael twelve sons: Nebaioth, Kedar, Abdeel, Mabsam, Idumas, Masmaos, Massaos, Chodad, Themem, Jetur, Naphtesus, and Kadmas. These inhabited all the country from Euphrates to the Red Sea, and called it Nabatene. They are an Arabian nation, and name their tribes from these, both because of their own virtue, and because of the dignity of Abraham their father. " Jerome (probably however, only following Josephus) says that Nabatene is derived from Nebaioth.

If this identification is not correct, then we must believe that there were two different tribes, with very similar names, both associated with Kedar, one mentioned only in early times, the other only in late times. The chief objection to accepting this identification is a philological one. Nebaioth is spelled with a Tau, (נַבְיֹוֹת) and the Nabateans in their own inscriptions spell their name with Ieth (𐤏𐤁𐤓𐤕). This change however, while not a common one, is not impossible.*

In 1835 Quatremere published his Essay on the Nabateans, taking the position that they were an Aramaean people from Mesopotamia. He drew largely on an Arabic work purporting to be a translation of a very early Nabatean book on Agriculture. The work is now known to be comparatively late, and of little value. Another point which caused some confusion was the fact that later Arab writers referred to the Syrians very often as Nabat. This is probably because the Nabateans were on the border between Syria and Arabia, and had assimilated a great deal of

* Cooke, p.216. Smith's Bible Dictionary, III, p. 2082.

the Aramaean civilization. The Arab tribes sweeping northwards would consider that the Nabateans were Syrians, and might use their name as a general term.

As a matter of fact, there is no longer any doubt that the Nabateans were an Arab tribe. The names on the inscriptions are conclusive on that point. It is true that the inscriptions are all in Aramaic. But it must be remembered that Arabic was not then a literary language. For purposes of intercourse with other nations, for court and official purposes, the Nabateans adopted the Aramaic language and characters. This is the view of Noldeke and all modern authorities: Josephus, who certainly understood the difference between Aramaean and Arabian, calls the Nabateans Arabian.

The earliest reference to the Nabateans is in the Assyrian records of the campaigns of Ashurbanipal, (668-625.) Ashurbanipal, after putting down a rebellion of his brother in Babylon, attacked the northern Arabian tribes which had joined in the uprising. One of the Kings fled to the territory of Natnu, the King of the Nabateans, (or, Nathan.) He was not received, and the Assyrian King settled matters for a time. Later, while he was engaged in war in Susa, Natnu joined the King of Arimi and the Prince of the Kedarenes in a rebellion. As soon as he was able, the King of Assyria led an army into the wilds of Arabia, defeating his enemies. Rawlinson (Ancient Monarchies, II 210) says that the Nabatean capital Petra was taken at this time. Lenormant says the same, (Hist. de l'Orient, III, 378ff.) There is nothing at all in the Assyrian records to indicate that Ashurbanipal went farther south than the Hauran. (Cylinders A, B, Records of the Past, 1st series) Further, there is no reason to believe that Sela had

* For use of a foreign language in official documents, cf. use of Greek in the Decapolis, and the cuneiform of the Tell-el-Amarna tablets.

as yet been occupied by the Nabateans. At any rate, the coalition of Arab chiefs was broken, all except Natnu were captured, and he was forced to pay tribute. The record says, (Cylinder P. col.8, lines 45-57,)

' Natnu King of Nabatea
 whose place is remote
 heard of the power of Assur and Merodach who protect me,
 who in times past to the Kings my fathers
 his envoy did not send
 and did not seek alliance with their kingdom.
 gain to me his envoy for alliance he sent
 he sent; and kissed my feet.
 to establish agreement and alliance and make submission to me
 he submitted to my dominion.
 I gladly received him, and before me favors on him conferred;
 axes and tribute for every year I fixed upon him. "

This submission of the Nabateans was only temporary, however. The great Assyrian Empire soon went to pieces, and the vassal states shook off their allegiance.

It is barely possible that Nebuchadnezzar (607-562) subdued the Nabateans for a short time, but there is no definite record of it. Nebuchadnezzar seems to have had the idea of diverting commerce to the Babylonian route, and in connection with his attempts to destroy Tyre, he must also have wished to crush the Red Sea commerce of the Egyptians and Nabateans.

I can find no authority for Lenormant's statement that the Nabateans were subject to the Persian Kings. On the contrary Diodorus Siculus, in speaking of the intense love of liberty of the Nabateans, and of the impossibility of attacking them in their desert retreats, says: " Therefore neither the Assyrians in

former times, nor the Medes and Persians; nor even the Macedonian Kings were able to subjugate them; for whoever attacked them, though with strong forces, ~~were~~ ^{were} nevertheless unable to bring their undertakings to a successful conclusion." And it seems in every way probable that except for brief and merely nominal submissions, the Nabateans were entirely independent.

We saw above (p5.) that the Nabateans probably occupied the territory of Beir, including Sela or Petra, at some time between 580 and 530 B.C. The next notice we have of them is a possible reference in connection with Alexander's siege of Gaza. We hear of certain "Arabian mercenaries" who assisted to defend the city. We know that Gaza was one of the sea-ports by which the Nabatean commerce found an outlet to the Mediterranean, and the inference is at least a fair one that the Gazites would turn to the Nabateans for help.

But our earliest certain knowledge begins with the year 312 B.C., with the expeditions of Antigonos, King of Syria, against Petra. We are indebted to Diodorus Siculus for this account. However, before describing the expedition, he remarks that it is worth while to stop and give a brief account of the Nabateans, and and it would not be amiss to follow his example and give at this point a summary of what he says. Apart from this account we have practically no information whatever about the Nabateans at this period.

According to Diodorus, then, they lived an open-air life, and were at home in that unsettled wilderness which had no springs or streams where a hostile army could get water. They were a powerful tribe, numbering some ten thousand fighting men. It was a law among them that no one might sow crops or plant fruit-trees, or use wine, or build a house; and breach of these laws was punished with death. (This may be a little exaggerated, but it probably reflects the general attitude of the nomads.) The reason for this was that they thought that people doing these things could be easily subdued by stronger enemies.

Some of them had herds of camels; some, herds of sheep. They wandered over the desert to find pasturage.

The Nabateans were preeminent among the Arabs. In addition to their pastoral occupations, a good many of them were in the habit of doing a carrying trade in myrrh, incense and valuable spices, which they obtained from the ones who brought them up from Central Arabia.

They were passionately fond of their liberty, and when strong enemies came to attack them, they withdrew to the desert, which was a better defense for them than any amount of ramparts. And so they were not conquered by the Assyrians, Medes, Persians, or even the Macedonian Kings. Invading armies always suffered for lack of water; for the Nabateans carefully concealed the cisterns which they themselves had cut in the soft rock, marking them in such a way that only they could find them. They watered their flocks only every third day, to prepare them for the hardships of a sudden flight across the desert.

The food of the Nabateans at this time consisted of milk and flesh, and whatever uncultivated products of the soil were good for food. The pepper grew in their territory, and a honey which distilled from the trees (i.e. "manna ") when mixed with water, furnished them with a kind of drink.

Such then are the Nabateans when we get our first clear glimpse of them— a powerful nomad tribe, already engaging in commerce, but not much in agriculture, living a free life in the safety of their desert-protected home.

On above description of the Nabateans, cf. Diod. Sic. XIX, 94. II, 49,

HISTORY OF THE NABATEANS? FROM 312 B.C.

In the year 312 B.C., Antigonus, the Seleucid King of Syria, having defeated Ptolemy Lagos, and driven him out of Coele-Syria, turned against the Nabateans. He put his general Athenaeus in command of four thousand infantry, and six hundred cavalry, and sent him to capture Petra.* Athenaeus timed his arrival so as to reach the stronghold while all the men were two days' journey away, attending a great fair. By a night attack he gained possession of the valley, seized a great quantity of spices and silver, and withdrew. The Nabateans however had been notified of his expedition, and arrived in hot haste¹ from the fair just after the Syrian army had left the valley. Infuriated by their losses, the Nabateans set out in pursuit. The Syrians, exhausted by their exertions of the previous days, had marched about twenty-five miles, and had camped. Never dreaming² that the Nabateans could overtake them within two or three days, they kept a very careless watch. A few of the captives escaped and gave information about this state of affairs to their countrymen—about six thousand in number—who had come up by a forced march. After midnight they fell suddenly on the unsuspecting army of Athenaeus, and cut them to pieces before they had a chance to resist. According to the account, only fifty horsemen, and those mostly wounded, escaped the slaughter.

Having thus taken vengeance on their enemies, the Nabateans gathered the spoil, including their own goods again, and returned to Petra. Then they wrote a letter to Antigonus— in Aramaic, (cf. above, p. 7)— charging Athenaeus with an unprovoked attack.

Antigonus wrote repudiating the action of Athenaeus, and tried to reassure the Nabateans, hoping to catch them unawares again. They were naturally suspicious, and kept guards posted on their frontiers, holding themselves in readiness. *But, however, Josh. Edm. Hinds thinks that our Petra is not the stronghold meant by Herodotus. He argues that the description does not fit Petra.*
But cf. P. 12.

ness for flight to the desert.

After some time Antigonus thought that the suspicions of the " Barbarians " were sufficiently quieted, and he sent his son Demetrius with a picked force of four thousand men, carrying rations for a forced march across the desert. He gave him strict orders to avenge the previous defeat.

This time however the Nabatean outposts discovered the approach of the " Greeks " and by means of signal fires, quickly warned the capital. The inhabitants at once put their most valuable possessions in the citadel under a strong guard, and then scattered with their flocks to different parts of the desert.

Demetrius, finding that his surprise was a failure, tried to storm the stronghold, but without success. " For it was on a rock, with no approach except one made by hand. " The Nabateans finally offered him gifts and hostages, and with this barren victory he had to content himself.

Several of the steep hills in Petra might have served for this stronghold mentioned by Diodorus. The hill of the Great High Place(the " Obeliskenberg " on Brunnow's map,) or the Acropolis, so-called, both have ruins on them of fortifications, though of a much later date. Either of these would have been impossible to take by direct assault.

This account of the two expeditions of Antigonus may seem disproportionately long, but the details are interesting as giving some idea of the times. And besides material on the history of the Nabateans is so scanty anyhow that one is glad to run across a full account of any part of it.

After these expeditions, we hear nothing further until the time of the Maccabees. We may infer with certainty, however, that the Nabateans grew in culture, and became more settled. They must have begun to build houses very shortly; unless, indeed, Diodorus exaggerates, and they had started even earlier.

Chronology of the Nabatean Kings.

Our sources for the chronology of Nabatean history are:

- a) Josephus.
- b) Coins and inscriptions.
- c) Scattered references in the classical writers.

There are some considerable periods during which we have no data at all for constructing a chronology. In several cases we cannot determine certainly to which of several Kings of the same name an inscription or a coin belongs. For convenience the following list of the Kings, with their dates so far as known, is given at this point. (Cooke, p. 216. Schurer, "Jewish People-" I, 2, 345.)

ARETIAS I, reigning in 169 B.C.

(Malchus i) *

Erotimus reigning 110-100 B.C.

ARETIAS II, " in 96 B.C.

OBEDAS I " in 90 B.C.

(Rabel i) *

ARETIAS III, circ. 85-80 B.C.

MALCHOS I, (ii) circ. 50-28 B.C.

OBEDAS II, circ. 28-9 B.C.

ARETIAS IV, 9 B.C. - 40 A.D.

ARETIAS.

MALCHOS II, (iii) circ. 48-71 A.D.

Rabel I (ii) circ. 71- 106 (?) A.D.

* Existence possible, but doubtful. Schurer, op. cit. 351, note.

* There was another Rabel before the last king sometime. (Cooke, p. 250) But it is not probable that he was just before Aretas III.

Some would place an Aretas (ii) after Aretas I. But ~~nothing~~ ^{this} is quite sure.

The outline of the history as we now take it up is derived almost entirely from Josephus, and is necessarily unsatisfactory in many respects. We get information only when the Nabateans come into contact with the Jews or the Syrians. No history written from the inside exists.

In 169 B.C., Jason, the High Priest of the Jews was refused refuge by a certain Aretas, ruler of the Nabateans. From the title given him, , we might possibly infer that the rulers of the Nabateans had not yet assumed the title of King, and that this Aretas I the founder of the dynasty. The name Aretas was taken by ^{several} subsequent Kings. It is interesting to note that at this time the Nabatean territory extended north as far as Bashan, bordering the territory of the Jews across the Jordan. For we find (I Macc.V:25,IX:35) that Judas Maccabaeus " passed over the river Jordan. And when they had gone three days journey, they met with the Nabateans, who came to meet them peaceably, and told them how the affairs of those in the land of Gilead stood. " (Jos. Ant.12:8) This was in 164. Jonathan also, (160 B.C.) " sent his brother to the Nabatean Arabians.--For they were the Jews' friends."

But this friendly attitude did not long continue. By the end of the second century B.C. the Nabatean Kingdom was rising to a position of commanding influence. The Ptolemies and the Seleucidae were becoming weaker and weaker, and the Nabateans quickly took advantage of the opportunity to extend their own borders and to build up their power at the expense of Egypt and Syria. Jerome quotes Trogus Pompeius as follows, speaking of the period from 110 to 100 B.C. "Egypt and Syria, with resources exhausted by their constant fighting, came to be despised by their neighbors, and were the prey of an Arabian tribe, formerly unwarlike; whose King, Erotimus, dividing his army, used to attack Egypt and Syria in turn, and he made a great name for himself. "

For the following century and a half the Nabatean Kingdom was an important factor in Eastern politics. The alliance of the King of Petra was eagerly sought; frequent collisions took place between the Nabateans- or Arabs as Josephus often calls them- and the Syrians, and ^{between the Nabateans and} the Jews, and later the Romans.

In the year 98 the Gazites were being besieged by Alexander Jannaeus, the King of Judea. " Aretas (II) King of the Arabians, a person then very illustrious, encouraged them to go on with alacrity; and promised them that he would come to their assistance. " The city fell, however, before his promised help came. This is the only item we have for the reign of Aretas II.

At this period- the beginning of the first century B.C.- the Seleucid Kingdom was fast approaching an end. The Assonean Kingdom, too, in Palestine, though apparently holding its own, and even extending its borders, had fatal elements of weakness in the internal discords between the various parties. With the Jews the Nabatean King Obodas I, the successor of Aretas II, came in conflict.

This was while Alexander Jannaeus was King of Palestine. His reign (104-78) was a stormy one. He extended his rule with considerable success, winning among other cities, twelve cities from the Nabateans, of which Madaba and Zoar were the most important.* But about 90 B.C. he joined battle with Obodas, " and fell into an ambush, in places that were rugged and difficult to be travelled over. Thus he was thrown down into a deep valley by the multitude of camels, at Sadara. " "

Shortly before the year 85 Aretas III became King of Petra, and he soon had an opportunity to show his ability. The Seleucid Kingdom of Syria was at that time torn by the struggles of the five sons of Antiochus Grypos against the sons of Antiochus Cyzicenos.

* Jos. Ant. XIV, 1.

* Ant. XIII, 13.

Antiochus XII, one of the sons of Antiochus Grypos, got into hostilities with the Nabateans. He fought also against Alexander Jannaeus. Having defeated the latter, he marched against the Arabians. " The Arabian King at first retreated, but afterwards appeared suddenly with ten thousand horsemen. Antiochus gave them battle, and fought desperately, but when he had gained the victory and was bringing some auxiliaries to that part of the army that was in distress, he was slain. When Antiochus was fallen, his army fled to the village Cana, where the greater part of them perished by famine. After him, Aretas reigned over Coele-Syria, being called to the government by those who held Damascus."^o

This victory left the Nabateans the only real rivals of the Jews, for Tigranes, King of Armenia, soon took the rest of Syria (B.C. 83,) and held it till 69.

From Damascus, Aretas made an expedition into Judea, and defeated Alexander near Abida. " Yet did he upon certain conditions retire out of Judea. " *

Damascus cannot have remained for long in the hands of Aretas, for in the year 70 we have a coin struck by the city as autonomous; about that time also it was occupied by the Jewish Queen Alexandra.*

We have a coin however, struck in Damascus, bearing the inscription of BASILEUS ARETOU PHILHELLENOS. It is interesting to note the title that Aretas takes, and to note the inference to be drawn from it as to the Hellenistic influence on the Nabateans,- an influence that even before this can be traced clearly in the architecture and even in the religion of Petra itself.

It was in the long reign of Aretas III that the Nabateans first came into collision with the Romans. The latter under Lucullus had defeated Tigrares, (69) and were then in a position to interfere in the struggle of Hyrcanus and Aretas against Aristobulus, which arose as follows.

^o Ant. XIII, 15. * Ant. XIII, 15.

* Ant. XIII, 16. This disproves the view that Petra held Damascus till 106 A.D.

After the death of Alexander Jannaeus in 78, his widow Alexandra became the nominal ruler, though the Pharisees had the real power. On her death in 69, civil war broke out between Hyrcanus, her eldest son, and Aristobulus, the second son. Aristobulus defeated his brother near Jericho, and peace was made on the agreement that Aristobulus was to have the throne.

It is at this point in the history that the Idumean family, which later under the Herods ruled the country, came into prominence in Jewish affairs. A certain Antipater (or Antipas) was, according to Josephus, made Governor of Idumea by Alexander. While Governor, he had made friends with the Arabians, the Gazites, and the Askelonites. The son of Antipater, also named Antipater, was a friend of Hyrcanus, and a friend also of Aretas. " He was very rich, and by his nature an active and seditious man, and he was at enmity with Aristobulus." ° Antipater saw clearly that he himself could play a far more important part in affairs with the weak Hyrcanus on the throne, than when Aristobulus was ruling. He therefore bestirred himself to get Hyrcanus back in power. This was not so easy Hyrcanus was of an easy-going disposition, and was quite contented not to meddle in politics again. After some difficulty, Antipater persuaded him that his life was in danger, and so he induced him to fly to Petra, to Aretas, the friend of Antipater's family.

Antipater then brought every influence to bear on Aretas to induce him to support the elder brother in a contest with the younger, urging him incessantly, and offering him presents. Finally, when Hyrcanus promised to restore the twelve cities which his father Alexander had taken from the Nabateans, Aretas consented.

With an army of fifty thousand horse and foot, he marched against Aristobulus and defeated him. Many of the Jews now flocked to the side of Hyrcanus, and Aristobulus fled to Jerusalem. The combined forces of Hyrcanus and Aretas

° Ant. XIV, 7.

besieged Aristobulus closely in the temple.

The story is told of a certain Onias, whose prayer for rain God had answered in a certain drought. Because he refused to curse Aristobulus, he was stoned by the besiegers. And again, the Priests shut up with Aristobulus in the temple, needed animals for the daily sacrifice. After negotiations with those outside, they made a bargain with them, and let down an extortionate sum of money from the wall to purchase the animals for the sacrifice. But those outside broke faith, and were thus guilty of a double crime, treachery and impiety. For this, and for the murder of Onias, God sent a terrible storm that destroyed the crops, and sent food up to famine prices outside.

In the meantime, Pompey- busy with his wars in Armenia- sent his lieutenant Scaurus to Damascus. Finding that it had been already taken by Lollius and Metellus, Scaurus went on into Judea. Both Hyrcanus and Aristobulus at once appealed to him for support, both sides offering arguments, and-what was more to the point- presents. Scaurus decided that more was to be gained from helping Aristobulus. " For it was not the same to take a city that was very strong and powerful as it was to eject out of the country some fugitives, with a greater number of Nabateans, who were no very warlike people." * Accepting Aristobulus bribe, he raised the siege, ordering Aretas to depart on pain of being declared an enemy of the Romans. Aretas did not dare to disregard Scaurus' order, and retired. The support of the Romans gave new strength to Aristobulus' cause, and he was able to gather an army, with which he defeated the retreating forces of Aretas near a place called Papyron, with a loss of over six thousand. *

In the year 63 Pompey himself came to Damascus. By the right of might, he

* Ant. XIV, 2.

* Wars, I, 6.

made himself the judge of all disputes, and Hyrcanus and Aristobulus, among the rest, came to plead before him. Each urged his reasons for being recognized by the Romans as the rightful king of Palestine. Aristobulus reinforced his arguments by a wonderfully wrought gold vine, worth five hundred talents. Pompey promised to arrange the matter after he had carried out his plan of subduing the Nabateans. Ordering the two claimants to remain quiet for the time, he led an army against Aretas.

The Nabateans were saved from an immediate attack by the hostile action of Aristobulus. Pompey turned aside, besieged Jerusalem, and captured it. (B.C.62) Thus ended Jewish independence.

Pompey placed Scaurus over the whole country " as far as the river Euphrates and Egypt". He then returned to Rome. Though he afterwards boasted of the subjugation of Aretas, there is no reliable evidence that he actually accomplished anything against the Nabateans.

Scaurus indeed led an expedition against Petra shortly after the fall of Jerusalem. He burned a number of towns in Nabatean territory, but found great difficulty in maintaining his army owing to the lack of water and supplies. At last, through the mediation of Antipater, a peace was arranged by the terms of which Aretas paid Scaurus three hundred talents to withdraw. The latter was glad enough to save his face in this manner. Again Petra was saved by the protecting desert around it. It is interesting to note a coin struck in honor of this expedition. On it Aretas is represented as kneeling, holding the bridle of a camel in one hand, and extending a branch with the other. The coin bears the inscription, REX ARETAE M. SCAUR. AED. CUR. EX S.C.

The succeeding Roman legates in Syria were constantly at war with the Arabians. * In 55 B.C. Gabinius made an expedition against the Nabateans, defeat-
* Appian, Syr. 51.

ed them in battle. It is not certain who was King of Petra at the time.

In the meanwhile affairs in Judea were getting more and more confused. The defeat of Crassus by the Parthians weakened Roman prestige for a while. Then followed the period of the civil wars between Caesar and Pompey, and the Romans had little time to spare for attacking the Nabateans. The Nabateans tried to keep the favor of the winning side. " Now after Pompey was dead, Antipater changed sides, and cultivated a friendship with Caesar. And since Mithradates of Pergamus with the forces he led against Egypt was excluded from the avenues about Pelusium, and was forced to stay at Ascalon, he persuaded the Arabians, among whom he had lived, to assist him, and came himself to him at the head of three thousand armed men. " "

In the year 47 we find Malchus I, King of Petra, called on by Julius Caesar to send cavalry to Caesar for the Alexandrian war, but he did not arrive in time to be of service.

After Caesar's death, Syria was under the influence of Cassius till 42, then of Mark Anthony, 41-80.

This period saw the rise to power of Antipater. He joined the Roman cause, was given office by Julius Caesar, and soon was the real ruler in the land. His son Herod soon showed his ability as a ruler in Galilee. Antipater was murdered.

In the year 40 Antigonus, the son of the deposed King Aristobulus, secured the help of the Parthians, and gained the throne. Herod, who had been the virtual ruler of the country, fled for his life, intending to take refuge in Petra. He counted on the old-time friendship that had existed between his family and the Nabatean Kings. Malchus, though deeply indebted to Herod and his father before him for loans of money and other favors, took the advice of his leading men, and refused to receive Herod. Herod then went to Egypt, and thence to Rome.

* Wars, I, 9.

Malchus repented of his refusal almost immediately, and sent messengers to recall Herod, but they did not overtake him. ° Herod at Rome secured a decree of the Senate making him King, and after three years' fighting, he secured the throne again, with the help of Roman troops. (E.C. 39)

Ventidius, on defeating the Parthians, exacted a tribute from Malchus for having aided them. *

Among the gifts of territory that Mark Anthony made to Cleopatra was a part of the territory of the Nabateans. Josephus says (Wars I, 22:3) that Cleopatra was responsible for the death of Malchus, but this cannot be correct. (Schurer, H.J.P. 2: 355) In B.C. 32 Malchus sent auxiliary troops to Anthony for the Actean war. *

Malchus soon got in trouble with Herod and Cleopatra. He was very remiss in paying his tribute for the part of his territory that had been given to Cleopatra. Herod was responsible for seeing that this tribute was paid. He therefore joined Cleopatra in appealing to Anthony. The latter commanded Herod to punish Malchus. Cleopatra cared little which of the two was the victor, counting on receiving the territory of the loser in any case. Herod defeated the Arabians at Diospolis. But later at Cana, in Coele-Syria, he was betrayed by Athabio, who was in command of the forces that Cleopatra had sent to help him, and suffered a bad defeat. For a time he had to content himself with making raids into the territory of Malchus, avoiding another battle. In the year 31 the land was devastated by a terrible earthquake. Exaggerated reports of the amount of damage that had been done reached the Nabateans, and they hastened to take advantage of their enemies' distress. With a barbarous disregard for the laws of warfare, they killed the Jewish ambassadors who had come to arrange terms of peace, and in

° Ant. XIV, 14. * Dion Cassius XI, vii, 41. * Plut. , Ant. 61.

invaded Herod's territory in force.

At first the Jews were too discouraged to resist. But Herod by extraordinary efforts raised an army, and by harranguing them and offering sacrifices, he encouraged them to attack their enemies. They crossed the Jordan, and defeated the Nabateans with heavy loss. Josephus says, (Wars, 179) " Herod punished Arabia so severely and so far extinguished the spirit of the men, that he was chosen by the nation for their ruler. " This does not mean that Malchus was deposed, but that he became a vassal, probably with the loss of a good deal of his territory. The last that we hear of Malchus is in connection with a plot to restore the aged Hyrcanus to the throne. Malchus promised his assistance. But Herod discovered the plot, and gladly took the excuse it offered for executing Hyrcanus. *

The successor of Malchus was Obodas II. (c. 28 B.C. - 9E.C.) At this period Petra was quite a prosperous city, on terms of outward friendliness with the Romans. Indeed, Petra, depending for its wealth on its extensive commerce, could not afford to antagonize the masters of the Mediterranean.

Obodas was a weak ruler, "He cared little for the affairs of state, and least of all for warlike affairs," says Strabo. (Geog. XIV.) He adds, " which is a common fault of the Arabian Kings. " " An inactive and slothful man in his nature," is Josephus description. He resigned practically all his power into the hands of a certain Syllaeus, an able but unscrupulous man, young and handsome.

In the year 25 E.C. Augustus ordered an expedition against the Arabs of the South, having heard rumors of their great wealth. The Romans counted on the support of the Nabateans, and Syllaeus joined them at the head of a thousand men.

* Ant. XV, 6.

Strabo tells how Syllaeus' treachery brought the expedition to nothing; for he led them around in the desert by devious roads, and conducted them back to the sea-coast only after a large part of the Roman soldiers had perished in the desert from disease and thirst and exhaustion. Strabo makes this treachery one of the causes for Syllaeus' execution a number of years later.

Towards the end of Obodas' reign, Syllaeus, happening to be at Herod's court, met Herod's sister Salome, and fell in love with her. Herod was willing that they should be married, as Syllaeus was the virtual ruler of Petra. He demanded however that he should accept the Jewish religion. Syllaeus refused, saying that he would be stoned by the Arabs if he should do such a thing. The marriage was broken off, and Syllaeus returned to Petra. Obodas, if not actually deposed, was a mere figurehead. Some coins are preserved that may have been struck by Syllaeus. He soon had an opportunity to revenge himself on Herod. A number of robbers and revolutionary leaders fled from Herod's province of Trachonitis, and were protected by Syllaeus. From a safe base in his territory, they made raids into Herod's dominions, doing a good deal of damage. Herod appealed in vain to the Roman legates. He made a final demand that Syllaeus should hand over the robbers, and should repay sixty talents that he had borrowed from Herod in the name of Obodas. Promising to do this, Syllaeus went instead to Rome. Herod, with the consent of the local Roman authorities, took the matter into his own hands, and punished the robbers with his own troops, killing a few of them.

Syllaeus at Rome had already made himself agreeable to Caesar Augustus, and seizing on the news that Herod had invaded his territory, he told the Emperor a wildly exaggerated story of the affair. Augustus in anger sent a sharp rebuke to Herod, and refused to listen to his side of the matter. The Nabateans were naturally elated at this turn of affairs, and became more insolent in their

raids into Herod's territory.

Obodas meanwhile died. A certain Aeneas, in the absence of Syllaeus, took the throne, changing his own name to Aretas(IV). This seems to have been a dynastic name. Syllaeus at once tried to persuade Caesar to depose Aretas in his favor. The Emperor was at first angry with Aretas for having dared to take the throne without waiting for his sanction. Aretas quickly sent a letter to Rome, and presents. He accused Syllaeus of having had Obodas poisoned, and asserted that that he was guilty of numerous other crimes. Augustus refused to receive Aretas' ambassadors.

Meantime Herod felt keenly the position in which his treacherous enemy had placed him. The loss of Augustus' favor was a serious matter. Accordingly he sent Nicholas of Damascus to Rome to plead his cause. Nicholas was able to prove to the Emperor that Herod was not to blame in the whole matter, and showed also that Syllaeus was really guilty of a number of crimes. Syllaeus was forced to pay Herod what he owed him, and then was executed.

King Aretas was finally allowed to keep the throne, though Caesar had at first intended to give his territory to Herod.

After Herod's death in B.C. 4-3, affairs in Judea were in confusion, and Roman troops were needed to restore order. " Aretas, out of his hatred to Herod, and in order to purchase the favor of the Romans, sent them no small assistance." The Arabians were so fierce however in the pillage of the territory of the Jews that Varus had to send them home.

Although Aretas reigned many years, and very prosperously, we have no further record of his affairs till late in his life. Herod Antipas, the tetrarch of

* Ant. XVII, 17, Wars, II, 5.

Galilee, married a daughter of Aretas', but later wanted to divorce her in order to marry Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. On learning of this, Aretas' daughter fled to her father's capital, and Aretas- who had a further quarrel with Herod about some boundaries- immediately declared war on Herod. The Nabatean King won a decisive victory, partly through the treachery of some of Herod's troops. This was in 36 A.D.

The Emperor Tiberius ordered Vitellius, the Roman legate in Syria, to punish Aretas for this war. For it was a settled policy of the Empire to allow no warfare between dependent Kings.

Vitellius with two legions had started for Petra when the news of Tiberius' death reached him. He at once gave up the expedition.

It was shortly after this time that Paul's flight from Damascus took place. We have the interesting statement that Damascus was at that time governed by an ethnarch of King Aretas. (II Cor, 11,32.) This is the only reference we have that shows that Damascus was then included in the Nabatean dominions, but the fact is indirectly confirmed by the absence of coins of Damascus in the reigns of Caligula and Claudius. It is out of the question that the Nabateans had captured the city from the Romans; but it is entirely probable that Caligula gave over the city in order to conciliate Aretas. We have Damascene coins of Tiberius dated 38-34, and later coins of Nero dated 62-68. It was in this interval, or part of it, that Aretas held the city.

The reign of Aretas IV must have been a prosperous one. His dominions were widely extended, as we know from inscriptions found at el-Hegr in the south, and the Hauran in the north. The wide reach of the commerce of Petra is shown by the two Nabatean inscriptions that have been found in Puteoli, the Italian sea-port, mentioning the name of Aretas(IV). His title is always given as "Lov-

er of his people," (). His feeling of national pride is in contrast to the earlier Arctas who styled himself " Philellen."

The successor of Arctas IV was Abias, mentioned by Josephus as King of the Arabians in the time of Claudius. He made war on Izates of Adiabene, across the Euphrates, supporting a faction that wanted to overthrow Izates because he had become a convert to Judaism. Abias was defeated, and committed suicide in order to avoid capture. This was about 46 A.D. * It is rather remarkable that such a distant campaign should have been undertaken, but it shows the wide extent of Nabatean activity.

Malchus II, (c.43-71) is mentioned only in connection with the Jewish war, as having contributed auxiliary troops to Vespasian, A.D.67. During his reign Damascus was again taken over by the Romans.

The last independent King of Petra was named Rabel. Of his long reign we have no information except what we can glean from coins and inscriptions. Some of the coins bear his mother's name as well as his own, so he must have been a minor at the time of his accession. He is mentioned in an inscription at D'rer, east of Damascus on the road to Palmyra, showing that his rule extended that far. at least.

We hear of no other King ruling after him. In 106 Cornelius Palma converted the Nabatean Kingdom into a regular Roman province, keeping practically the old boundaries. It was perhaps a mistake in policy to have deprived the Nabateans of their independence, for they were a valuable defense against the wild desert nomads that have always been surging towards the more settled districts of Syria and Palestine. In the fourth century the province was divided into Arabia, with Bostra as capital, and Palaestina Fertis, with Petra as capital.

Christianity in Petra.

Christianity was apparently introduced into Petra at an early date. We records, in council reports and in Eusebius and Jerome, of various Bishops of Petra who attended councils in the early Christian centuries. Several of the temples show signs of having been later converted into churches. Further, some of the ruined buildings in the valley seem to have been churches. One or two graves at the foot of the Hill of the Great High Place are marked with crosses, (possibly dating, however, from the crusades.) It seems a little strange that so few of the tombs show signs of having been distinctly Christian. We may perhaps suppose that the decline of the city set in before Christianity gained a complete victory. Furthermore, the tombs were expensive, and the early Christians were for the most part poor.

Fr. Lagrange mentions a hermitage cut in a cliff above the road leading to the Deir. Evidently some Christians lingered in the valley for centuries, for the walls have inscriptions in Arabic asking for prayers for a sinner. On a seemingly inaccessible rock above remain the letters IC XR NK, Jesus Christ is Conqueror. "The Christians are no more, but before yielding they threw upon the rock a cry of triumph. It is there on the cliff, high enough so that no one has attempted to efface it, and it awaits the future!"

History of Petra, after 106.

For a time at least the prosperity of Petra seems to have increased rather than declined under the direct Roman rule. Some of the most magnificent tombs and temples date from this period. The city seems to have been pretty thoroughly Romanized.

Evidently the Emperor Hadrian bestowed some favors on the city, for we have coins calling the city by his name. Petra was made first a metropolis, and later given the rank of a colony.

A part of the city's commerce was diverted to the southern trade route through Egypt. And the rise of the great commercial city of Palmyra to the north was also detrimental to Petra's prosperity.

Domaszewski^o believes that the end of the city came not so much through a gradual decline, as through some sudden catastrophe. There are no remains of a period later than the most magnificent. With Alexander Severus the coinage ceases. " Just at that time the rise of the new Persian Kingdom took place, and a destructive invasion of the Sassanides against Petra, as the preliminary of Alexander Severus' Persian war, does not lie outside the range of political possibility. " "

We have, however, references to Bishops as late as 584, and though the place may well have suffered some crushing blow earlier, it probably continued to exist, gradually losing in strength and importance, until some unrecorded Arab invasion swept away the last vestiges of the Nabatean civilization. It must have ceased to be of any importance whatsoever by the time of the Mohammedan invasion in the seventh century, for the Arab historians of the conquest do not even mention it.

^o Die Provincia Arabia, p. vol. 1.

The site of Petra was known to the Crusaders, but only as "Vallis Moysi". Baldwin # visited it in 1100, but stayed only a few days. About 1135 Kerak, east of the Dead Sea, was built, the name Petra was also applied to it. This confusion of the real and the supposed sites of Petra continued more or less down to the present century, when the ruins of Wady Mousa were rediscovered by Burckhardt in 1812.

There is every reason to believe that Wady Mousa was held for a time by the Crusaders. We know of a castle called Vallis Moosa which was taken by the Saracens c. 1144, and retaken by the Crusaders. There are in Petra the remains of two late fortresses, one on the Acropolis Hill, and another near the Great High Place. * It seems likely that one of these, presumably the larger one on the Hill of the Great High Place, was the one referred to.

I find that this identification has also been suggested by Fr. Hughes Vincent (Rev. Bib., Jul, 1898). He quotes the further detail that in 1158 a party of Moslem soldiers besieged a place called el-Oua'irah for eight days, but without ~~success.~~ Vincent would ~~also~~ locate el-Oua'irah in the valley of Petra, but the site has since been identified about an hour away. Crusading occupation of the district is confirmed by this incident, however.

The date of the loss of Wady Mousa by the Crusaders is not known exactly, but but it must have been before 1182.

A pilgrim to the Sinai Peninsula in the time of the Crusades mentions the strange rock excavations in the valley, but has no knowledge of their real identity. From that time on we hear absolutely nothing.

* Cf. Robinson, II, 185. ~~Robinson did not know of the castles found in Petra, and and so believed "Vallis Moysi" was a castle he noticed outside.~~

Since 1812 the site of Petra has been visited by numerous travellers, at first with considerable difficulty. The recent completion of a large part of the railroad south from Damascus to Mecca has made the trip much easier, as it is now possible to ^{by rail} go to Ma'an, a day's ride east of Wady Mousa, ~~W. Felix~~.

Extent of the Nabatean Kingdom,

The wide extent of the Nabatean rule has already been mentioned. It is interesting to note how many of the conflicts between the Nabateans and the Syrians, and between the Nabateans and the Jews, took place in the north. And in thinking of Petra as the capital we should not lose sight of the fact that there were some very important cities in the north also that belonged to the Nabateans. Chief of these was Bostra, in Hauran. The Nabateans made it a great trading center. It was an older city than Petra. Under the Romans it reached a high degree of prosperity, as the splendid ruins show.

The port of Elath, and Ezion-geber also, was in Nabatean territory, but the great sea-port of the Nabateans was Leuke Kome. There is some doubt as to the exact situation of this place, but it was probably down the Arabian side of the Red Sea, nearly at the mouth of the Bay of Akaba. In Roman times there was a garrison stationed there under a centurion, for protection, and also to collect a customs duty of 25%.

Farther south, and in the interior, was ^le-Hegr, an important town on the great caravan route to Arabia Felix. A number of tombs at ^le-Hegr are like a certain type at Petra. Many valuable inscriptions, dating from the reigns of Aretas IV (9 B.C. - 40 A.D.) and Malchus II, (C. 48 A.D. - 71.) have been found here. *

Another set of inscriptions are those found in the Sinaitic Peninsula, along

* Doughty, Arabia Deserta, I, p.

one of the great trade routes. They are unimportant in themselves, being only a name and a greeting. "Remembered in welfare and peace be Sa'adu, the son of Garm-alba'ali, for ever!" But their presence in the lonely vallies of Siiai, indicates, as Euting suggests, the presence of a force of Nabatean officials, perhaps in connection with the customs duties- stationed in the region.

Still more remarkable are the two Nabatean inscriptions found at Puteoli. As one of the great sea-ports of Italy, Puteoli naturally attracted agents of foreign commercial centers to it. A community of Nabateans was established in the Italian town at least fifty years before the beginning of the Christian era. They established a shrine for their own worship, and used it for fifty years till it needed restoration, and it is the restoration of the shrine, in 5 A.D. that is recorded in the inscription.

There were still other towns in the Nabatean territory that might be mentioned; in Wady Sabra, quite near Petra there was a small town, with tombs and a theater much in the style of the capital; but enough has been said to show the wide extent and the great influence of the Nabatean Kingdom.

THE NABATEAN CIVILIZATION.

Thus far the standpoint has been to a large extent external; and necessarily so. For we have been dealing with political events, and we have no Nabatean historians.

It is possible, nevertheless, to do a good deal towards reconstructing a more detailed picture of the city of Petra, as it must have been in its early days of prosperity.

The detailed description of Diodorus Siculus has already been given, presenting the Nabateans of the fourth century B.C. as a pastoral people, just beginning to settle down, engaging to a certain extent in commerce, but not to any extent engaging in agriculture, and not yet dwelling in houses.

Our chief source of information for the later Nabateans, is Strabo's Geography, Bk. 16. Then, too, giving concreteness to our knowledge, and explaining things that would otherwise not be clear, we have the remarkable ruins of Petra as they are today. These, together with coins and inscriptions, a few scattered references in classical authors, and our general knowledge of Semitic life and the Greek and Roman influences on it, must furnish us the material for the further study of the Nabatean civilization.

We shall take up, then, in some detail, the study of:

- I. The Nabateans as a people; their customs, government and daily life, so far as we can get details.
- II. The Nabatean Trade.
- III. The ruins of Petra; Nabatean architecture and art; buildings; public works.
- IV. The religion of the Nabateans; especially the places of worship.

I. The Nabateans as a People.

We have seen that the Nabateans were originally of Arab stock, beginning their national career with many of the nomad characteristics still prominent. But they were rapidly influenced by contact with the more advanced and settled civilizations of Egypt and Syria. As Arabic was not then a literary language, they adopted the Aramaic language for official purposes, and for a medium of communication with the neighboring nations.

The admirable opportunity offered by Petra was taken advantage of before long, and the early aversion to building permanent houses was soon overcome. The rise of a wider and more organized commerce also necessitated greater complexity and stability of institutions. From Strabo we gather a number of details about the Nabateans of his time- the reign of Augustus- and we note a considerable development from the picture given by Diodorus. The following paragraphs give a rather free summary of Strabo.

" The Nabateans used to make raids into Syria before the Romans became masters of that province. Now both Syrians and Nabateans are under the Romans. The chief city of the Nabateans is the town called Petra. It lies in a fairly level space; All around are rocks and precipices, but within are fountains that furnish abundant water for gardens and irrigation. Outside the rock walls, the territory is for the most part desert, especially towards Judea. Jericho is the nearest point in that direction, three or four days' journey distant.

In Petra one of the royal stock always rules, and besides, the King has a procurator, or prime-minister, chosen from among his companions, whom he calls his 'brother'.

From the inscriptions we find that many of the officials of the Kingdom

 * The floor of the valley is not dead level, but has a number of ridges.

had Greek titles, such as Strategos, - another evidence, if such were needed, of the influence of the Hellenistic civilization on that of the Nabateans.

Strabo says further, "The people are governed by good laws. Indeed, the philosopher Athenodorus, my close personal friend, on coming home from a visit to Petra, told me of his surprise at finding many Romans there and other foreigners besides, who were constantly bringing lawsuits against each other, and against the natives, while the inhabitants of the city on the other hand lived at peace with each other."

The following quotation from *ttbā* an inscription on a tomb in el-Hegr is important as showing the legal status of women.

"This is the tomb which Kamkam, daughter of Wailat, daughter of Haramu and Kulaibat her daughter made for themselves and their posterity: in the month Iebeth, the ninth year of Harethath, King of the Nabateans, lover of his people!"

Evidently then married women could hold property and could bequeath it. It is interesting also to note that the genealogy is reckoned partly through the female line. Women must have held a prominent place, as they are often represented on coins.

Evidently a record of deeds of property was kept in some temple in Petra, and the tombs were regarded as under the protection of the deities. Curses are invoked on all who disturb the tombs, or bury others in them than those for whom they were built. Besides, a fine is specified for desecration of a tomb.

The Nabateans were regarded as a wealthy people. Strabo-speaking of all the Arabs- says they were not very warlike, being rather merchants and traders. Josephus says that Scaurus considered it more difficult to help Hyrcanus to

capture Jerusalem in to help Aristobulus to drive out the Nabateans " who were no very warlike people." (Ant. XIV,2.) Still it must be remembered that in their conflicts with the Jews, victory was with the Nabateans at least half of the time. And it must have taken no mean amount of energy and ability to build up and to administer and to defend a kingdom that reached from beyond Damascus to a point well down the Red Sea.

" The Nabateans were a prudent race, intent on getting money and keeping it. Therefore a man who wastes his property is fined publicly, but the one who increases his property is honored." (Strabo.)

" Brothers take precedence of sons. What they possess is common to all the relatives, but the eldest is the head of the family. They practise community of wives. Since there are few slaves among them, relatives often wait on each other, or each man attends to his own wants, and this custom extends even to the Kings. They have music at their banquets, and the King holds frequent feasts with great ceremony. No one drinks more than eleven cups. The King is so democratic that besides waiting on himself, he often waits on others. Oftentimes, he even appears before the people to give a report of his administration. No one ever attempts the King's life.

Their houses are built of costly stone. The cities have no walls, for they pass their days in peace. Their territory is productive of everything except olive trees. They use oil made from sesame. Their sheep are white, their cattle large. They have no horses, but use camels instead. They wear their tunics with a belt around them, and use sandals. The kings wear purple.

Many things are produced in their territory, as gold, silver, and many kinds of spices, brass, iron, and purple cloth." (Strabo.)

II. The Trade of the Nabateans.

We have seen that Petra is a natural stronghold, and has been occupied as such from the earliest times. But merely as a stronghold it could never have attained the position which it actually held. Its strategic position commercially was what determined that it was to be the capital of a great kingdom, and not merely the refuge of a tribe.

The great trade routes from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean, and from the Red Sea and Arabia to Syria and Babylon, all passed through Petra. "Not a few of them are accustomed to carry incense and myrrh and valuable spices to the seacoast (of the Mediterranean) having received them from those who brought them from Arabia Felix," says Diodorus, speaking of the early Nabateans. " Some say the best spices are brought from India, and the best incense grows in Persia." * Diodorus mentions also a valuable export trade in the bitumen found near the Dead Sea, which was taken to Egypt for use in embalming mummies. (XIX, 93.)

Vincent says,* (" As there is the strongest evidence to show that the Tyrians and Sidonians were the first merchants who introduced the produce of India to all the nations which encircled the Mediterranean, so there is the strongest evidence to prove that the Tyrians obtained all these commodities from Arabia." " Caravans in all ages from the interior of Arabia and from Gerrha on the Gulf of Persia, from Hadramaut on the Ocean, and some even from Sabea and Yemen, appear to have pointed to Petra as a common center; and from Petra the traffic seems to have again branched out in every direction to Egypt, Palestine and Syria, through Arsinoe, Gaza, Tyre, Sidon, Jerusalem, Damascus, and a variety of subordinate routes that all terminated on the Mediterranean. "

* Vincent, " Hist. of the navigation of the ancients on the Red Sea, II, 232ff.

The Nabateans desired to have a monopoly of the trade, and resorted to the rather crude tactics of plundering the caravans of others. When the Alexandrian Kings had opened the route by the Red Sea and Egypt, the Nabateans showed their hostility for this rival trade channel by attacking shipwrecked crews, and finally building ships of their own they plundered the merchant ships of others. In the end their pirate ships were captured by Alexandrian war vessels, the crews were executed, and the sea was made safe for Egyptian commerce.

It was the gradual diversion of trade from the route through Petra to shorter routes by way of Alexandria and Palmyra which caused a decline in the prosperity of Petra.

But for a while under the Roman rule, the system of roads and the establishment of a strong chain of military posts along the desert from Petra north to Damascus, made the carrying trade easier and safer. Fragments of these roads remain today, with the ruins of the guard stations, to attest that the Romans, whatever their faults, at least gave their subjects peace and an opportunity to develop.

III. The Ruins of Petra. Architecture, Art, etc.

The ruins of Petra as they exist today are unquestionably among the most remarkable in the world. In many ways they are unique. In the first place, the city as we have seen, is situated in a valley well-nigh shut in by precipitous rock walls. It should not be thought however that the wall is absolutely complete, as some descriptions might imply. For on the north east and south west there are considerable spaces by which the city can be approached without great difficulty. The real inaccessibility of the city has lain in the desert that surrounds it and in the impregnable citadel in the city itself.

Not only is the situation picturesque in the extreme by reason of the rugged mountains that meet the eye on all sides, but the marvelous and varied coloring of the rocks themselves adds greatly to the impression produced. This feature of the coloring has impressed every successive visitor to Wady Mousa. Each records that he had considered the descriptions of his predecessors exaggerated, ~~until~~ until the reality was before him. And so it must be. For no description can do justice to the vividness and variety of the tints. "The rocks -- present not a dead mass of dull monotonous red, but an endless variety of bright and living hues, from the deepest crimson to the softest pink, verging sometimes to orange and yellow. These varying shades are often distinctly marked by waving lines, imparting to the surface of the rock a succession of brilliant and changing tints like the hues of watered silk, and adding greatly to the imposing effect of the sculptured monuments. " * - Seen in the mass, it is true that the dominant effect is of red or purple. But viewed in detail, the separate tombs often show all the colors of the rainbow, - except green; and green is not lacking from the general color scheme, for the bed of the stream is lined with a dense growth of oleander bushes. And in the old days, when the public squares and the terraces before

* Robinson, II, 14¹.

the tombs were planted with gardens, the effect must have been beautiful.

Above one of the tombs is an inscription which reads:

" This sepulchre, and the large vault within it, and the small vault inside, within which are burying places fashioned into niches, and the wall in front of them and the rows(?) and the houses within it, and the gardens, and the garden of the ? and the wells of water, and the ridge (?) and the hills (?) and the rest of all the entire property which is in these places, is the consecrated and inviolable possession of Dushara, the god of our lord, and his sacred throne (?), and all the gods (as specified) in deeds relating to ~~the~~ consecrated things according to their their contents. And it is the order of Dushara and his throne (?) and all the gods that, according to the contents of the said deeds relating to consecrated things, it shall be done and not altered. Nor shall anything of all that is within them be withdrawn; nor shall any man be buried in this sepulchre save his who has in writing a contract to bury, (specified) in the said deeds to consecrated things- for ever."°

For ever! and now the front of the tomb is shattered, by an earthquake perhaps; in the recesses where the merchant prince and his family were laid, the chance shepherd shuts his goats and sheep; long since the bodies were dragged out in the hope that treasure might have been buried with them; and the " gardens"- the place where they once were can scarcely be distinguished among the ruins.

{ The eastern entrance to the city is through a gorge, now called the Sik. One rides down from the limestone range to the east, and follows the bed of the brook. A sudden turn, and the brook enters the gorge. The walls rise high on either side, the space between often narrowing to ten or twelve feet, and nowhere wider than

° OIS ii 350. Cooke, p.241.

thirty feet. The wall reach up three hundred-perhaps in places four hundred feet, perpendicular, and in places overhanging so that they shut out entirely the narrow ~~ni~~ ~~few~~ ribbon of blue sky above. To ride down that cool shadowy path, with only here ~~ar~~ here and there a place where the sunlight filters down to bring out the living hues of the wonderful sandstone, would be an ~~experience~~ ~~experience~~ that would repay the journey were ther nothing more. But add to the beauty of the present the romance of the past, and the ride is indeed one never to be forgotten. Once, in the days of the city's glory, the brook was covered over and flowed under a paved street? Along that duskt way the long lines of heavily laden camels used to pass^s bearing their burdens of spices to the ware-houses of the capital. Through this gorge the Kings of the Nabateans rode out at the head of their troops to carry war against Syria or Judea. These rocky walls once echoed to the clatter of the Roman chariots, going to and fro along the Imperia^l highways that bound the provinces together, into one whole. And now, one's horse stumbles and splashes among the stones in the bed of the stream, and only an occasional niche in the wall, and the channel for a small aqueduct remain to show that the Sik was once the chief approach to the populous capital of a mighty Kingdom.

Strabo tells us that many foreigners visited Petra, and it must have been with some reference to the first impressions of newcomers that the Nabateans placed the chief monument of their city, the Khuzneh, or Treasury of Pharaoh. Anything more dramatic than the first view of this Treasury could scarcely be imagined. After a ride of fifteen or twenty minutes a turn in the gorge gives a glimpse of an opening at the other end. Standing out from the darkness on either side appears a part of the treasury. A few seconds more and the gorge opens out into a cross valley, and directly opposite, almost glowing in the stronger light, stands this monument, carved in the face of the rock.

* If indeed the brook was ever allowed to flow through the Sik. cf. P.

It is easy to criticize the architecture at one's leisure afterwards, but the first effect is almost overwhelming. The size of the work is not appreciated at first, till one measures it by the height of someone standing in the doorway. One of the pillars has fallen, but the loss is scarcely noted at first. Much of the carving seems as fresh and sharp as if it had just been finished, and the damage done to the various figures, is the work of over zealous Mohammedans, and not of the weather; for the overhang of the rock above has protected the Khuzneh to a very great extent.

The other ruins of Petra are intensely interesting also. At the treasury, the valley widens a good deal, and splendid tombs are carved in the rock walls on both sides. A few minutes walk, and the great theater appears on the left. The proscenium is in ruins, but the seats, cut out of the living rock, could still accommodate an audience of five thousand people or more. * The voice of a person speaking in ordinary tones can be heard perfectly from the topmost row. In full view from the theater are some of the most magnificent tombs.

A description of these tombs in detail is not necessary here. Many good accounts have been written of them. (cf. bibliography.)

The chief public buildings of the city lay in the open valley beside the stream, the banks of which were once carefully walled in. Apparently too the stream for a distance was completely covered over. Numerous bridges crossed it. Only a single building is still standing, the so-called Palace of Pharaoh. (The Arabs attribute everything in the valley to Pharaoh, or Moses. The ball carved above the treasury is supposed to contain a treasure hidden there by Pharaoh , and it is scarred by the bullets that the Bedawin have fired at it in the hope of breaking it open.) -----|-----

* Some have put the seating capacity at 3000. Personal measurements convince me that 5000 is not too large.

Besides the "Palace" about the only structure that can be recognized is a Triumphal Arch, or Grand Entrance to some temple or public building. (cf Mar.) The other buildings have been destroyed, partly perhaps by enemies, mainly by successive earthquakes. The residences of the town once covered the floor of the valley, and the lower terraces of the enclosing rock masses. They are now mere shapeless masses of building stones. It seems reasonable to suppose that careful excavations among these ruins would bring to light many an object of interest. For unlike many ancient sites, most of the valley is not plowed up each year by the fellahin, and so whatever may have been buried in the ruins has not been uncovered.

The building material was the red sandstone of the surrounding cliffs. The softness of this stone accounts in part for the almost total disappearance of the houses. But it is interesting to pick up fragments of limestone, and even marble and granite, and other stone, which must have been brought, often from very great distances for the beautifying of the city in the days of its splendor.

The monument of chief interest after the Treasury is the Deir, or Monastery. The traditional title suggests its use at one time as a Christian church, and this view is borne out by the cuttings within that suggest an altar. Presumably it was transformed after the city became more or less Christian, as it is not essentially different from many of the other monuments, except in size.

The situation of the Deir is very striking. Grand flights of steps hewn from the rock lead up to it, by way of a winding valley. It faces a little plateau, and like all the other monuments is carved from the face of a cliff. This plateau was evidently a much frequented place. The circle of what was probably a small amphitheater can still be traced on the level space in front of the Deir. Great cisterns for storing water are to be found near, once carefully

lined with cement. There are many tombs in the vicinity, and also a number of "High Places."

In all about nine hundred tombs, temples, and other monuments are to be found in Petra. A very interesting growth in Architecture may be traced. Many tombs, presumably the earliest, are entirely unornamented, and are simply chambers cut in the rock. It is barely possible that some of these were once used as dwellings; though it is far more likely that they were tombs of an early period.

Following the classification of Domaszewski, (Brunnow, Provincia Arabia,) we may summarize the classes of the ornamented tombs as follows.

The earliest tombs were cut in the "Obeliskenberg," the hill above the theatre. This hill with its two obelisks and Great High Place is to be regarded as the center of the earliest settlement. The ornamentation of the tombs here is comparatively simple, and they are perhaps more weathered than the others. In the rock above the theatre are the remains of tombs that were destroyed in the process of carving out the theatre. Evidently these must have been of much earlier date. It is natural to suppose that the first tombs would be put near the sacred mountain, to be under the protection of the divinity. (Compare the protection invoked in the inscriptions

These tombs in the neighborhood of the theatre are classed as "Pylon Tombs", and they are comparatively small, and show no traces whatever of Greek architectural influence. The facade is carved evidently to represent the ordinary dwelling of the Nabateans. The "Brick-work parapet" is characteristic of this type. Some of these tombs are carved so as to stand free on three sides, giving a still closer

representation of a house. A few are entirely detached.

As time went on and wealth increased, there was a natural growth in elaborateness. Pilasters appear, and various marks of Greek influence may be noted. It was only natural that the Hellenization that so profoundly affected all the architecture of the world at that time should be brought in as the commercial intercourse of the Nabateans with the outside nations grew closer and closer.

The next distinct type is called the "Step Tomb." The half-battlements at the ends are enlarged till they meet in the middle.

The next type is called the "Proto-Hegr." The Hegr is the town in Arabia already mentioned. This type, and its more developed form, are found predominating at el-Hegr. Probably however they were not original there: it seems certain that the fashion of the capital is reflected here, rather than the reverse. It must not be understood therefore that the name implies that the type was original in Arabia, and was then copied in Petra. Still, there has been no other name suggested for this type, and it is better to keep the classification.

The "Proto-Hegr" type is marked by the addition of pilasters at the side. In the "Hegr" type there is a space between the lower part of the tomb and the top ornamentation. (cf. figures.)

These tombs are dated by inscriptions of the reign of Aretas IV, (B. 99-40A, D)

Another type of graves are the "Arch Tombs".

(From the standpoint of "classical" architecture, the remains of Petra must be confessed to be of a low order. But as they stand, they are very impressive, and even beautiful; and as reflecting the influence of Greek civilization on a Semitic people they are interesting.

It has been strongly contended that the influence of Egypt can be clearly seen in much of the architecture of the city. The only points of resemblance which

which are specified are that the facades of many of the tombs converge towards the top, like the gateways of some of the Egyptian temples. So much may well be due to Egyptian influence. It would be strange if the Nabateans had not gotten something from their contact with Egypt which their situation and their commerce made very close.

The contention however that the Treasury is a temple of Isis does not seem to commend itself to the majority of those who have examined it. The arguments advanced in Brunnow's work do not seem sufficient. The figures are unfortunately too much defaced to be made out with any certainty. Every traveller has a different and guess as to what they represent.

Many of the tombs, as remarked by Robinson (II, 129) closely resemble the tombs in the valley of Jehoshaphat in Jerusalem.

A number of the tombs of Petra have obelisks carved on them, one being surmounted by four, carved in high relief. Pyramids were used in connection with tombs in Palestine in the time of the Maccabees. " " Here then appears to be another link connecting the later sepulchral architecture of Palestine with that of the adjacent Arabia and Petra. " "

Of Nabatean sculpture we have practically nothing. Brunnow gives a photograph of a headless statue. Across the valley from the " Arch of Triumph" the carved stones of a frieze were dug up, showing figures of winged lions, etc. In many places are votive niches which appear to have had figures carved in relief. In an obscure valley at the foot of Mt. Hor our party found a large carving of a seated female figure, draped-but headless. Rude figures of animals, as ibex, are found in some of the tombs. But the zeal of the Moslems has obliterated every trace of a face in the ruins. Nothing has been found of any real artis-

* Ant. XIII 6.

* Robinson, II, 130.

several places narrow gorges have been dammed up to catch the torrents that came rushing down in the rainy season.

The cisterns were naturally placed so as to take advantage of the channels which the rain water followed down the rocks. Many other channels were cut to lead the water in the proper direction. Again, the tombs were protected by channels which led the streams of rainwater away from the facades. Of course these have not availed much after so many centuries.

In connection with the places of worship, spoken of later, the arrangements for drainage and for collecting water were very elaborate.

A remarkable work which escaped the notice of ^{the} earlier travellers was the tunnel cut just outside the entrance to the Sik. As mentioned above, the Sik was once paved over, and used as a roadway. Now in the spring floods, when the rainfall of a considerable mountain side is concentrated in the narrow Sik, the stream has a tremendous volume, filling the gorge to a depth of ten feet and more. To carry off this torrent, a tunnel was cut 17 ft. wide, 20 ft. high, and over 300 ft. long through the rock to the north of the entrance of the Sik. The stream was diverted by a dam of some sort, and flowed through this tunnel to empty into a valley behind the north wall of the Sik, reaching the valley of the city to the north of the end of the eastern wall. (of. map.) It may be that at times the stream was allowed to flow through the Sik under the roadway; quite possibly it was all carried around, except the little that was brought in by the aqueduct.

Stair-cases

The location of the tombs and places of worship at different levels in the surrounding cliffs, and on their tops, has necessitated the construction at an almost incredible expense of labor, of great flights of steps cut from the solid rocks. Except where an unusual amount of weathering has taken place,

these steps are still in good preservation. The visitor today is distracted by the great number of these steps that lead temptingly up, promising some new discovery at their top, and though the ruins have been pretty thoroughly explored, still they are so widely extended and so difficult of access, that minor discoveries will probably continue to reward careful search.

IV. Religion; places of worship.

There remains for discussion one of the most interesting subjects connected with Petra and the Nabateans, namely the religion and places of worship.

Especially since the growth of interest in comparative religion and since the beginning of the historical study of the origin and development of Judaism the subject of the religion of the Semites has been of especial interest. The religion of the Nabateans is thus related to a wider inquiry.

We have little material about the religion of the Nabateans in classical authors, and we get most light from inscriptions, and from a study of the places of worship in Petra as we find them today.

It appears that the two chief deities of the Nabateans were Dusares, or Dushara, and Allat (al-Lat.)

Dusares is a title and not a proper name. (Du-shara= Lord of Shara.) We get the proper name of Dusares in the following way: (When the Nabateans came into close touch with the Hellenistic influences in Palestine and especially Syria, Dusares was identified with the Greek god Dionysus. We learn from another source that the Nabatean god identified with Dionysus was called Drotal. Again, we often find the names of Dusares and Allat mentioned together, and also the names of Allat and Drotal. The inference is obvious that Dusares= Drotal."

A number of places exist named Shara. " Wellhausen enumerates three, described by Arabic writers as remarkable either for swampy ground, or for lions, or for water, tree and jungle. Such localities were esteemed especially suitable for a hina or temenos of a god, and Shara, wherever it may be was probably a place of this kind. " (Cooke, p. 218.) On this point Domaszewski takes a somewhat different view. " After figuring this out, I find that Clermont-Ganneau suggested it some time ago.

ferent view. . There is a passage in Stephen of Byzantium stating that Dusares was a high mountain of Arabia, after which the god was named. Hence the Nabateans call themselves Dusarinsi. From the fact that the range in which Petra lay was called es-Sara, Domaszewski concludes: "(This high mountain of Arabia of Stephen of Byzantium is then the holy mountain of Petra itself.)"

This does not seem quite conclusive. But whatever the origin of the title, it gained a wide currency. Wherever the Nabateans went, they carried the worship of Dusares. In the northern part of the kingdom, where the contact with Hellenism was most direct, syncretism took place between Dusares and Dionysus, and the Nabatean deity was invested with the attributes of the Greek god. On coins of Bostra of the third century B.C. we find the representation of a wine-press, and the words ΑΚΤΙΑ ΔΟΥΣΑΡΙΑ. Originally of course Dusares was not a god of the vine and agriculture- for those were forbidden the early Nabateans-, but there is some evidence that Dusares was a Sun-god,- which would give a basis for the identification with Dionysus. (Strabo, speaking of the Nabateans, says, "They worship the sun, building an altar on top of the house, pouring libations and offering incense daily.")

Another notice of the worship of Dusares is preserved by Suidas in the article under THEOS ARES. Of course the Nabatean deity has nothing to do with "the god Ares", but the details given of his worship at Petra are probably correct. ("Theusares, that is, the god Ares, in Petra, in Arabia: The god Ares is worshipped by them. For they honor him most of all. The image is a black stone, rectangular, not carved into an image, four feet high, and two broad. It rests on a base of beaten gold. To this they sacrifice, and they pour out the blood of the victims, and this for them is the libation.")

We find carved on some of the tombs an obelisk resting on a square base.

Other similar marks were perhaps placed on their finished work by masons. In both cases the idea was doubtless to secure the protection of Dusares, for it seems that this mark was a representation of the idol.

Petra was the center of the worship of Dusares. Altars at Adraa in the north show that this town took part in a yearly festival at Petra. Epiphanius describes the festival held at Petra Dec. 25. He mentions the idol there, and says:

Τούτο δὲ καὶ ἐν Πέτρα τῇ πόλει (μητρόπολις δὲ ἐστὶ τῆς Ἀραβίας ἣτις ἐστὶν Ἐδὼμ ἢ ἐν ταῖς Γράφαϊς γεγραμμένη) ἐν τῷ ἐκεῖσε εἰδωκίῳ οὕτως γίνεται καὶ Ἀραβικῇ διαλέκτῳ ἐξ ὑμνοῦσι τὴν Παρθένον καλοῦντες αὐτὴν Ἀραβιστὴ Χασαβοῦ τούτέστιν ~~μονογενὴ τῆς θεοπότου~~, Κόρην ἢ γοῦν Παρθένον, καὶ τὸν ἐξ αὐτῆς γεννημένον Αουτάρην, τούτέστιν μονογενὴ τῆς θεοπότου.

This " virgin-goddess " must have been Allat. If the reading ΧΑΣΒΟΥ be correct, we have a possible reference to the worship of a square stone similar to that of Dusares. (cf. the Kaaba at Mecca, Eng. word cube.)

At Tabala in Arabia there was a stone of Allat, with a crown carved on it to indicate the head. (R. Smith, Bel.Sem. 212.) Another stone at Iakif was regarded as the dwelling place of the goddess. (R.S. 210) Allat is mentioned constantly in connection with Dusares in inscriptions etc., and hence Wellhausen's theory that Dusares was conceived of as born from his own cyprus or image does not seem to be well founded. (cf. R. S' p. 55.)

Allat, the Mother of the gods, (~~the goddess~~) was the chief goddess of the ancient Arabs, even more widely worshipped than Dusares. She is mentioned in the Koran(52:20) with al-'Uzza, and Manat, (Manathu). Her hija or center of worship was at Isif, sixty miles south east of Mecca. Her worship extended as far north as Palmyra, and to the Punic settlements of Carthage. The name probably meant originally " goddess " . In the bi-lingual Palmyrene inscriptions she is identified with Athene. There are some grounds for thinking she might be a

sun-goddess, but in a Palmyrene inscription she is mentioned separately with "Shemesh" By Herodotus and others she is called *Ἥρα*, some heavenly goddess, possibly the moon-goddess, with Duses the sun-god. Allatu was the Babylonian goddess of the lower world, but Allat seems to have had no such characteristics. *

Besides these deities, several others are mentioned in inscriptions. Manuthu, Quaiha,* and Hobal.* A'ra is also mentioned. (= Ortal ??)

It is noteworthy that divine honors were paid to the dead Kings. "This is the statue of the divine Obodath" says one inscription, (OIS ii 354.) And in Stephanus Oboda is mentioned, "A town of the Nabateans, where King Obodas is buried, whom they worship as a god." (Quoted in Heland, p. 92.)

Places of worship.

We may now take up one of the most important subjects in connection with the religion of Petra, namely the "High Places."

Throughout the Old Testament we find abundant reference to worship "on every high hill, and under every green tree." This is especially true of the Northern Semites. "In Arabia on the contrary, most sanctuaries seem to have lain in moist hollows, beside wells and trees." (R.S. 489) To a certain extent this latter form existed in the north also. It makes little difference for the present discussion whether this form was older, with the High Place worship developing later when a bare hill top was sought for burnt offerings, (R.S. 490) or whether a high open place was sought from the first in obedience to an im-

* The paragraph on Allat is summarized from Cooke, p. 282.

* Quaiha:Manuthu: Nothing very definite is known of these divinities.

* Hobal (Hubalu) An old Arab deity, the chief god of the Kaaba. Cooke, 221, 252.

pulse to get as near as possible to the heavenly deities. In any case, worship in high places was well established in very early times. It was on a mountain that Abraham was to offer Isaac, (Gen. 22:2) on a high place ^{that} ~~at~~ Solomon burned sacrifices at Gibeon, etc. (cf. Is. 15:8 ; Jud. 6:26; I.K. 18:19)

Remains of high places and sacred groves are still to be found in many places in Syria and Palestine. But comparatively little remains except the rough blocks that marked out the sacred enclosure, and the old trees, doubtless the descendants of those that once were sacred to the Ba'al of the place, for even today the groves ^{es} are so much respected that articles are brought from the fields and left there in safety, and even the dead trees are not cut up, much as the inhabitants need fire wood. It is unfortunate that some of these groves are now being destroyed by men who have absorbed enough of the modern spirit to free them from superstitious fear, and not enough of it to make them see the wisdom of saving the few trees left in an almost denuded country.

In view of the interest of the subject and the previous lack of direct evidence on ancient high places, the discovery of a high place at Petra was one of no little importance. The early visitors to Wady Mousa did not discover it, having only a few days, or sometimes only a few hours, in the valley, owing to the unfriendly attitude of the natives of the neighborhood. But in 1885, E. S. Wilson in exploring the summit of the hill above the theater, came upon two obelisks, and not far away found a great court cut in the rock, with altars, pools, and other outtings. *

Since the discovery of this " Great High Place"; many others similar to it in many respects have been found, about twenty three in number.

* This H.P. has been described and discussed in detail by Wilson, " Century mag, 1885, Curtiss, P.E.F.Q., 1900, Robinson, Bib. World, Jan '01, Feb. 98. Savignac, Rev. Bib. Apr. 98.

to explain what we do find; what we do find, may explain points not hitherto clear.

No attempt will be made to press identifications between II and III unduly;

I. Characteristics of Semitic High Place Worship. *

- 1-At first the High Place,() as the name suggests was on a high hill; (Jer 3:6, Dt 12:2.) Later, the name was used for places in vallies or towns.
- 2- There was some sort of sacred enclosure at the high places, the "Haram."
3. There was an upright stone or pillar. This was regarded first as both an altar for slaying the victim, or for pouring libations on, and as in some sense the abode of deity.

Later these two ideas were separated, and we have:a) the pillar;b)an altar.

* References: Rob. Smith, Rel. Semites. Hastings B.D.and Encyc. Bib. arts.
 " High places" " Asherah" etc. etc.

3- b)

This altar was at first of earth or unhewn stones; later of hewn stones; altars of brass were used; "horns" of the altar are mentioned.

4- There was sacrifice, consisting of:

- a) Animals; sometimes human victims.
- b) Grain, fruit, bread, etc.
- c) Libations.
- d) Incense.

Sacrifice was sometimes completed by the act of slaughter; sometimes all the victim was burned; sometimes part was burned.

5- Quite universally in early times the people after presenting their offerings to the deity, then had a "sacrificial meal" in which they ate their own offerings. R.S. 254; Ex. 34:15, IK 12:32,33.

6- There was sometimes a "house" of some kind. I K. 13:32, II K 17:29.

7- There were sacred trees and poles-Asherah-; sometimes also groves. Gen 21:33.
I SA 22:6.

8- In many cases images and idols are mentioned besides the pillars. II K 18:4.

9- Licentious rites were often practised with the sanction of religion; regular provision was made for them by having temple attendants.

A noteworthy point in connection with all the Semitic religions was a very scrupulous distinction in matters of ceremonial defilement. This made necessary frequent ablutions. Lev. 8:6, Ex. 30:17-21. Ex. 19:10-15, Herod. 11:37.

In many cases also burial took place near high places. II K 23:15-16.

II. If we try to imagine what an old high place must have looked like, the foregoing study gives us the following points^{*)} which must find a place in the picture:

*) It may be that all of these features would not be found at every H.P. But most of them certainly would.

- 1- We should expect the high place to be on an elevated spot, open to the sky.
- 2- We should expect some sort of an enclosure or boundary of the sacred place.
- 3- An upright pillar, or a pillar and an altar. An early altar we should expect to be of earth or unhewn stone; later we might expect to find hewn stones. We might look for "horns" on the altar. Steps were once prohibited; later, allowed. (Ez. 48:15, Ex. 20:26, Ez. 48:17.) The steps would look towards the east. (Ez. 48:17)
4. We should expect to find a sacred tree or pole; and perhaps a grove.
- 5- We should expect to find images, with perhaps a "house" for them.
- 6- Some provision for cooking the sacrificial meal was surely needed.
- 7- There was a guest-chamber in which to eat this meal. (I Sam 9:13,22-24.)
- 8- We might expect to find provision for the temple attendants in the vicinity.
- 9- Some provision for ceremonial washing must have been made.
- 10- Near the high place we should look for tombs, as at Bethel. (II K 23:15)

III. The features we actually find in Petra are as follows: (Cf. plans.) *

- 1- The great majority of high places * are on elevated points. We find also:
- 2- A court, cut in the rock- or several courts- from a few inches to over a foot deep, with a ledge around, looking like a seat. (All but no. 6).
- 3- Very extensive arrangements for collecting and storing water in cisterns; very numerous small basins for water, with inlet and outlet, and often a cup-like hole in the bottom to allow the last water to be gotten out. These are found in EVERY case.
- 4- Concentric parts of circles, the inner one lower. (1,3,6,9.)

* The numbers in parentheses refer to the plans.

** To speak of these as "high places" is anticipating the conclusions a little, but there is no other convenient designation.

III. continued. We find the further features at Petra of:

- 5- Tomb chambers in the immediate vicinity. (All cases.)
- 6- Other chambers, once roofed over. Supports for roof- beams or arches still visible. (2,4,6)
- 7- An altar, squared; or an unhewn rock with steps cut in it.(1,2°3,4,6,7,8,10)
- 8- Only at the Great High Place, two obelisks left in the living rock by very extensive cutting away of the surrounding rock. These obelisks are not at the Great High Place, but a great stair way led up from them to the G.H.P.
- 9- Most of the altars face east and west, with the steps on the eastern side. From most of the altars the rising sun is visible; from a large number Mt. Hor is visible.

From the foregoing, there can be no doubt of the broad identification of the cuttings at Petra as places of worship; and their general likeness to what we should have expected of a Semitic high place leaves little room to question that these are high places essentially similar to those that caused so much trouble in the religious history of Israel.

The identification of some of the leading features is plain; that of others is more uncertain. On the next page the correspondence between what we should expect at an old high place, in particular a Nabatean high place, with the features actually present, is shown in parallel columns. A question mark indicates that the correspondance is doubtful. The points are considered separately in the next pages.

What we should expect to find at a High Place.

What we know to have existed among the Nabateans.

What we actually find at the Places of worship.

- 1 An elevated site.
- 2 A pillar, or pillars.
- 3 Some sacred enclosure.
- 4 An Asherah- sacred pole, or tree. Perhaps a grove too.
- 5 Images.

Elevated sites.
Two pillars or obelisks near the Great High Place.
Rectangular courts.
Trees are found growing near many of the H.P.s.

- 6 A "guest chamber" for the eating of the sacrificial meal.

A square stone representing Dusares; almost certainly one of Allat.

? A yearly festival with singing of hymns to Dusares and Allat.

Covered courts; rock chambers, apparently not tombs.

7. Provision for cooking the sacrificial meal.

? Circular cuttings that might be used for boiling cauldrons.

- 8 Provision for killing the blood sacrifices.

Blood sacrifices existed.

Altars with channels running from the top.

- 9 Provision for burnt-offering.

One altar (G.H.P.) has what seems clearly a hearth.

- 10 A place for libations.

Libations (of blood at least) existed.

? Concentric circular cuttings. (cf. 7 above.)

- 11 An altar or place for burning incense.

Incense was burned.

? Altar in southern section of the Triple High Place.

- 12 Lavers etc. for ceremonial washing.

Numerous pools, cisterns, etc. for water.

- 13 Possibly, rooms near by for the temple attendants.

Chambers, apparently not tombs.

- 14 Altars placed with reference to east and west.

The Nabateans worshipped the sun.

All altars are on a line approximately east and west. The steps are on the east side.

- 15 Tombs in the vicinity.

Divine honors were paid to dead Kings.

Tombs are always found not far from the high places; usually they are quite near.

NOTE. The ? does not indicate that the fact is itself doubtful, but only that its connection with the corresponding parallel columns is not certain.

Discussion of p. 57.

1. Elevated site. Several of the most conspicuous sites in the city are occupied by high places. Practically all are on some eminence, sometimes on a conspicuous rock mass, which may not however be the highest point in the vicinity. We should expect that the earliest sanctuaries perhaps would be on the more prominent points. Later, as population grew and more places of worship were required, lower and more convenient sites would be chosen. If there is a connection, as there seems to be, between the high places and the tombs, (see below on no. 15) then the choice of site would be influenced by the necessity of making the high place with reference to the position of the surrounding tombs.

2. Pillars. Only the two pillars at the Great High Places have as yet been discovered. There seems little reason to doubt that they were symbols of deity such as are known to have existed at ancient places of worship. " Melcarth was worshipped at Tyre in the form of two pillars-- Twin pillars stood also before the temples of Paphos and Hierapolis, and Solomon set up two brazen pillars before his temple at Jerusalem. (I K 7:15,21) As he named them * the Stabliher" and ' In HIM is Strength ' they were doubtless symbols of Jehovah. " (R.S 208.) The question is an open one whether the two pillars at Petra stood for one god, or for two. If for one, it was of course Dusares. But the suggestion is a fair one that one represented Dusares, and the other Allat. One point that should be noted is that the pillars are hewn out of the rock, and are not pillars set up untouched by the chisel, as was the case in the very earliest times.

3. The sacred enclosure is represented by the various courts cut in the rock. The ledge around the edge suggests a seat, though in many cases it seems pretty shallow. Still, Orientals are satisfied with a low seat.

4. The pole or Asherah being made of wood has of course vanished, if it ever existed at Petra. The trees which are sometimes found growing near the high places are no necessary proof that sacred trees grew near in ancient times. Still from analogy we should expect that there might have been sacred trees there, and the fact that trees continue to grow near at least indicates the possibility that such was the case formerly.

5. Images. The black stone image of Dusares is nowhere to be found. It has gone the way of the "gold and treasures that were in his house", that we read of in Suidas. The pyramids or steles cut in relief on tombs and in votive niches in some cases, suggest that they were intended to be representations of this idol on its golden base.

6,7. The provisions for sacrificial meals seem quite plain. In I Sam. 9, there is a description of a sacrificial meal at a high place, which shows us what to look for at a high place in this connection. "Saul and his servant--went up the ascent to the city; they found young maidens going out to draw water, and said unto them, Is the seer here? And they answered them, and said, He is; behold, he is before thee; make haste now, for he is come today into the city; for the people have a sacrifice today in the high place. As soon as ye are come into the city ye shall find him straightway, before he goeth up to the high place to eat; for the people will not eat until he come, because he doth eat ^{bless} the sacrifice; and afterwards they eat that are bidden. Now therefore get you up; for at this time ye shall find him. And they went up to the city, and as they came within the city, behold, Samuel came out toward them, to go up to the high place. -- Then Saul drew near to Samuel in the gate, and said, Tell me, I pray thee,, where the seer's house is. And Samuel answered Saul, and said, I am the seer. Go up before me unto the highplace, for ye shall eat with me today; and in the morning I will let thee go, and will tell thee all that is in thy heart. --And

has been made that metal "horns" of the altar were here attached. But why not on the fourth corner? Some, but not all, of the altars have a passage cut so as to permit them to be encircled.

10. Libations. One conjecture as to the use of the concentric circles found at some of the places of worship is that they were used for the pouring of libations. But they seem low. The same concentric circles appear in one altar at the G.H.P., and in plan 6 on a large rock mass, in no. 9, and in several of which plans are not available. It has also been suggested that they were fire-places, where great cauldrons were set for the cooking of the sacrifice. Some seem too large for that. Altogether, these circles are one of the most puzzling features that appear.

11. Incense. The use of incense is specifically mentioned by Suidas. And apart from the reference even, we should not have thought it likely that the Nabateans would carry the incense for the altars of the world, and not have used some on their own. The method of burning it cannot be determined. If any altar could be conjectured to be specifically for that purpose, it would be the one in the eastern section of the Triple High Place. But there is a drain running from the top of that altar, which suggest the pouring of libations. (The ^{small} size and position preclude its being for sacrifice.)

12. One point is beyond doubt, and that is that ceremonial washing had a very prominent part indeed in the worship. The extensive and elaborate arrangements for storing water, and the numerous pools and basins at every place of worship are apparently indispensable features. Indeed, our knowledge of the importance attached to ceremonial cleansing would have led us to expect these, and their absence would have been quite surprising.

13. It has been suggested* that some of the chambers near the places of worship may have been for the temple attendants, and may have had some connection with the imacral rites connected oftentimes with the high place worship.

14. A point has arisen in connection with the orientation of the altars. Dusares was quite probably a sun-god. The altars all face approximately east and west. But the steps were on the east side, and one ascending them would face west. However, that seems to have been the rule in sun temples. "The temples at Ba'albek and thirty other places in that region invariably face the east, the rising sun entering the opening door and lighting upon the altar which stands against the western wall."

We also examined the orientation of the altars with reference to Mt. Hor, "Jebel Neby Haroun". Apart from the question whether it^k is really the Hor where Aaron died, there is no doubt that the shrine on its top is of immense antiquity. Rock steps leading to the summit have been worn out, and new ones carved. Now it sometimes seems to be the case that shrines around a great central sanctuary point towards it. This is true of the high places of Petra, and Mt. Hor. But many of the altars, while they "face" Hor in the sense that one ascending the steps looks towards it, do not command a view of that mountain. Many however are in full view of it. This is especially true at the G.H.P. where as one mounts the altar the attention is at once arrested by the view of Hor. If it could be shown that widely separated altars leave the east and west line so as to keep pointed towards Hor, the hypothesis of a connection would be strengthened. This is true only in a few cases, and in view of the necessity for cutting the courts and altar with some reference to the existing rock masses and considering the indifference of the ancients to a few degrees more or less, the point cannot be pressed.

From practically all of the altars the rising sun can be seen. The view therefore that the altars are orientated with reference to the sun seems more probable than that they were arranged to face Mt. Hor.

15. Another point of considerable importance is the relation of the places of worship to the tombs. What we know of ancient and modern customs in the East, shows that there was a strong desire to bury the dead near some holy spot. And there was a corresponding tendency to build places of worship near the tombs for the holding of funeral rites and memorial feasts and services. These tendencies correspond to our custom of burying in the churchyard, and building chapels in our cemeteries.

It is probably the first of these tendencies that is exemplified in the Great High Place. There is every reason to believe that its site has been sacred from the remotest antiquity. Nothing is more persistent than the sacredness of a holy spot. Empires and religions may come and go, but the sacred sites are handed down from one to another. The most desperate efforts of reformers, extending to the deliberate defilement of the altars with the bones of the slaughtered priests, scarcely availed to stamp out in Israel the high place worship which the Jews practiced in the spots which they had taken from the Canaanites. The temple site in Jerusalem is a good example of the persistence of a sanctuary through many changes. Tradition makes Mt. Moriah the spot where Abraham was about to offer Isaac. The present rock with the cave underneath, and the opening in the top is remarkably like a prehistoric place of worship at Gezer. *

* Cf. F.R.F.O. 1903. It is interesting also to compare the description of the pillars, enclosure, and earlier cup-shaped cuttings in the rock, caves, etc. at Gezer with the places of worship at Petra. The ones at Gezer seem more primitive.

It is a reasonable supposition that the Jebusites had some sanctuary on this, the highest spot in Jerusalem; before David took the city and built his altar there. Solomon built his temple on the same spot, and ever since, through the successive destructions of the city, and under the various religions and races that have held the city, the spot has remained sacred. Jew, Egyptian, Roman, Arab, Frank, Turk, have all built altars here. To this day, Jews, Moslems and Christians regard the site as sacred. This suggests the probable history of the Great High Place at Petra. In the earliest times we may suppose that there was a sanctuary there, - rude in its appointments perhaps, with some form of a sacred enclosure, with an upright pillar for an altar and a representation of deity. The Nabateans on coming in would then have found the site already sacred, and would have entered into the use of it along with the rest of their new possessions. We need not suppose that the present elaborate form of the High Place was the original one. Savignac * would date the present form from the important reign of Aretas IV, when so much building was done. There is nothing however about it which could not perfectly well date from the period of the earliest tombs. The sole point to determine a date is the fact that there was no longer any scruple about chiseling the altar and the obelisks.

There are however more than twenty similar high places in other parts of the city. It does not seem likely that all these were of equal antiquity or importance. They seem to have been added as the expansion of the population made it necessary to utilize new parts of the valley. In comparing these we note:

The Great High Place and the Triple High Place are more complete than most of the others; they are on commanding eminences, and are approached by a large number of elaborate stairways. Surely these two, at least, may claim to rank as public sanctuaries, genuine high places of great antiquity and importance.

o. c. e. early Jerusalem.

** Rev. Biblique, Apr '03.*

The mountains which are topped with these sanctuaries are filled with tomb cuttings, but these were probably put there to share the sanctity that already attached to the high places. In II W 28:15,16, we find, " Josiah brake down the altar that was at Bethel, and the high place. -- And as Josiah turned himself, he spied the sepulchres that were there in the mount. --" Ez. 43:7,8 seems to refer to the burial of certain of the Kings of Judah near the Temple. The tendency is strong today, for thousands of Jews lie buried on the slopes of Mt. Zion, and many come from distant lands to die in the Holy City, in order that their last resting place may be near the Holy Mount. The desire to be buried in the churchyard, or under the very altar is a custom that roots back in the same instinct.

But there was a similar, but distinct, tendency to build some place of worship in the Nekropolis. In Greek, Roman and Egyptian usage it was the rule to make provision for worship and memorial feasts at the tombs. Sometimes the tomb chamber was used for this purpose, the bodies being buried in chambers that opened from the main one. . Some such connection may be traced between the less important places of worship at Pera and the tombs that surround them. There is no considerable section of the city that has not some rock court sanctuary. There was always a preference for raised spots, but the placing of many of the places of worship seems to have been distinctly limited by reference to the surrounding group of tombs.

We may conclude then that certain of the more conspicuous and elaborate of the places of worship at Petra were public sanctuaries: High Places in the proper sense of the term. They were probably on the sites of ancient Edomite shrines. Tombs were built as near as possible to them in order to share the sanctity .

The other less elaborate, less prominent, and less accessible places of worship were made primarily with reference to the tombs, and may be regarded as mortuary chapels, where funeral rites were celebrated, and commemorative feasts were held. Indeed, certain chambers seem to combine the features of a place of worship and a tomb. In one excavation near the Treasury- named the " Council Chamber there is an indoor counterpart of the outdoor rock courts, with the ledge like a seat. There are a number of other similar ones, in one at least of which there is a loculus for a body. And in one which we found in the lower Sik, we discovered a number of inscriptions, commemorative of certain people.

This closes the discussion of Petra, so far as my present knowledge is concerned.- I regret that when I visited it I did not know as much about the history and religion of the Nabateans as I have been able to find out since. On the other hand, I should not have had enough interest in the subject to study it at all, apart from the inspiration of having seen the ruins of the town. I hope some day to visit Wady Mousa again, to try to get more decisive evidence on some of the doubtful points.

Additional notes on burial.

1- On the Akropolis hill, above the Kiar, is an unusual form of tomb, which closely resembles a Roman " columbarium". This is the only one of the kind, so far as I can learn.

2. Strabo makes a very strange statement about the burial customs of the Nabateans. He says: ἵνα κοπρίας ἠγοῦνται τὰ νεκρὰ σώματα -- εἰδὲ καὶ παρὰ τοῦς κοπρῶνας κατορθύττουσι καὶ τοῦς βασιλεῖς

The statement is manifestly untrue; but Clermont-Ganneau has suggested how the mistake arose, from confusion between the Nabatean word ~~קבר~~ meaning tomb, and the Greek word κοπρία.

Additional note: There has been a good deal of discussion as to the character of some of the more important monuments, such as the Treasury, the Deir and some of the more elaborate monuments in the eastern wall. Are they tombs, or temples? There is no question that a majority of all the excavations- all indeed except the few indicated- were tombs. This creates the presumption that even these more elaborate ones were also tombs. On the other hand, they seem too elaborate for the tombs of any individual. The Deir too has such an unusual cutting on the back wall that it seems almost certain that it was used for worship. Robinson sums up the situation very well:

"Was this(the treasury) a temple, or merely a dwelling for the dead? There is nothing in the monument itself to determine this question. But if any of the wonderful structures of this place may be considered as temples, I should regard this as one. " " Yet not all the structures, I think, were sepulchral. Some of the larger and more splendid were probably temples of the gods. The facility and beauty with which the facades of monuments could be sculptured in the rocks might easily suggest the idea of constructing fanes for the gods in like manner. And such excavated temples were not unknown in Egypt. " (II, 133, 142.)