

*The following paper was received a little before the recess of the Royal Society, in 1763; but was afterwards mislaid, and not found 'till the beginning of April 1764. To this accident is solely to be imputed the delay of it's publication.*

XXII. *Some Remarks upon the first Part of M. l'Abbé Barthelemy's Memoir on the Phœnician Letters, relative to a Phœnician Inscription in the Island of Malta. In a Letter to the Rev. Thomas Birch, D. D. Secret. R. S. from the Rev. John Swinton, B. D. F. R. S. Member of the Academy degli Apatisti at Florence, and of the Etruscan Academy of Cortona in Tuscany.*

Good Sir,

Read April 12,  
1764. **M.** l'Abbe Barthelemy having lately communicated to the learned world (1) a copy of one of the Phœnician inscriptions long since discovered in the island of Malta, more accurately taken (as he pretends) than any of those that had ever before appeared, and attempted to ex-

(1) *Mem. dans lequel on prouve, que les Chinois sont une colonie Egyptienne, par M. de Guignes, &c. p. 39—54. A Paris, 1760.*

plain

plain it in a manner perfectly new; I shall beg leave to make a few cursory remarks upon what he has been pleased to advance, on this occasion. Which remarks may perhaps be deemed not altogether unnecessary, as part of the inscription, according to M. l'Abbé's lection of it, seems at least somewhat involved, if not wholly unintelligible; and consequently will admit, unless I am greatly deceived, of a farther illustration. Nor can M. l'Abbé be disgusted at my presuming to differ in a few particulars from him, as he is not acted by a spirit of ostentation, or a thirst after applause, but the love of truth; and as he has taken the same liberty with one of my dissertations, which the Royal Society did me the honour to publish a few years since, upon a similar subject.

## I.

M. l'Abbé observes, that “ in (2) the beginning  
 “ the Phœnician letters were not distinguished from  
 “ the Samaritan; but that most of them in process  
 “ of time admitted of such great variations, that the  
 “ traces of their origin are very frequently lost.”  
 Hence it seems to appear, that the later any Phœnician inscriptions are, the more the forms of their letters must recede from those of the correspondent Samaritan; and, vice versâ, that the more remote the ducts of any Phœnician elements from those of the correspondent Samaritan are, the later such characters, and consequently the inscriptions formed of them, must be. Let this be allowed, and it will be sufficiently manifest, that the Maltese inscription (which

(2) Ibid. p. 39.

our author seems to have had principally in view, when he made the preceding observations) is several years at least posterior to the days of Simon, prince and high-priest of the Jews. The alphabet therefore deduced from this inscription, which differs pretty considerably from that exhibited by the sepulchral stones found in the ruins of Citium, ought not to pass for the true antient Phœnician alphabet, that prevailed over so great a part of the East in the earlier ages.

From the passage here produced we may farther infer, that the Phœnician inscriptions either coeval with the Samaritan coins struck by Simon, prince and high priest of the Jews, or older than those coins, must be formed of letters, for the most part, extremely similar to the Samaritan. And this we find in fact to be true. Many of the elements therefore of those inscriptions may be more easily discovered by the assistance of Simon's medals, than by that of any monument of antiquity several hundred years later. Nay, the powers of many letters, allowed to belong to the Phœnician alphabet, have been actually ascertained by means of the correspondent elements on the Samaritan coins. We must not therefore too hastily admit, or too closely adhere to, what M. l'Abbé has been (3) pleased to lay down, in the most unlimited terms, as a certain and indubitable truth; viz. that "a Phœnician alphabet ought by no means to be founded upon the affinity of its letters with those of other alphabets." The alphabets he himself has given us, incomplete as they are, will be considered as a sufficient refutation of this assertion.

(3) Ibid. &amp; Planch. I.

What has been here observed of the Maltese inscription is, with regard to it's antiquity, at least, equally applicable to that of Carpentras (4), the ducts of whose letters are still more remote from those of the Samaritan; and consequently this, according to M. l'Abbé's decision, must be still of a later date. And, indeed, the rude and almost barbarous forms of it's Phœnician elements render this incontestably clear. Some of them are extremely similar to, if not apparently the same with, those of the correspondent letters on certain Spanish or African Phœnician coins, struck, as there is reason to believe, after the commencement of the Roman empire. And if this be the case, how can we suppose them to have been some of the first alphabetic characters that ever appeared, or those immediately deduced (5) from hieroglyphics themselves? They seem to have been only corruptions of the earlier Phœnician letters, from whose forms several of them have very considerably varied. So high an antiquity as that above supposed is not announced by the face of the inscription, and therefore the learned will not perhaps readily assent to such a supposition.

## II.

The eleventh letter of the first line, which is taken for *Thau*, seems to have been a little mutilated by the injuries of Time; as part of the strait line cutting

(4) *Ibid.* p. 53.

(5) *Recueil d'Antiquit. Egypt. Etrusq. Grec. & Romain.* par M. le Comte de Caylus, Tom. I. p. 65. Plan. xxvi. A Paris, 1752.

the perpendicular, in this element, is effaced. That this is fact, appears from two tetradrachms of Menæ, an antient town of Sicily, at present going under the denomination of Menéo, now in my hands; on one of which the whole figure of this kind of *Tbau* is perfectly well preserved, and on the other a similar figure is visible, though the original transverse line has been somewhat diminished. One of (6) Lord Pembroke's medals of the same town also presents to our view a *Tbau* completely formed. We meet with this letter in the Citiean inscriptions, sometimes as it has been handed down to us by the Punic Medals of Sicily, and sometimes as it is represented in M. l'Abbé's plate of the Maltese inscription; part of it perhaps having been lost, in the course of so many ages. However, that the earlier Phœnician *Tbau* frequently bore some sort of resemblance to the character taken for the same element on the Sicilian coins, there is great reason to believe; since otherwise it could not have resembled a cross, as it most certainly did. For that the antient Samaritan *Tbau*, nearly agreeing in figure with the Phœnician, had the appearance of a cross, we learn from some good (7) authors. In the later periods, and perhaps to the time when the Phœnician alphabet itself began to be disused, it might in certain countries, pretty remote from Phœnicia, have assumed a somewhat different form, though this I must not pretend absolutely to affirm; but that the inscription I am considering exhibited at

(6) *Num. Ant. &c.* à Thom. Pemb. et Mont. Gomer. Com. *Collect.* P. 2. T. 87. Lond. 1746.

(7) Tertullian. Hieronym. &c. Vid. Val. Ern. Loefcher. *De Caus. Ling. Eb.* p. 234. Francofurti & Lipsiæ, 1706.

first the complete figure of *Thau*, (8) from P. Lupi's draught of it, taken upon the spot, in 1735, I think we may fairly presume. And that the *Thau*, as it there appears, was not seldom used in the earlier Carthaginian times, from the medals of Menæ already touched upon, to omit others that might be produced, is, I conceive, incontestably clear.

### III.

I cannot forbear suspecting, that M. l'Abbé has a little deviated from the genuine form of the *Aleph* in his plate; notwithstanding the accuracy with which, as he informs us, Count Caylus's copy was taken. That Phœnician element occurs upon my Punic and Phœnician coins, not to mention those of my friends, above thirty times; and yet not one of these characters exhibits an angle, formed of two right lines cutting the perpendicular, as does the *Aleph* here. Nor do we meet with such a figure of *Aleph* in the Citiean inscription, preserved on the original stone, brought from Cyprus by Dr. Porter, and presented to the University of Oxford by Charles Gray, Esq; member of Parliament for Colchester, and fellow of the Royal Society; though the usual form of this letter is found, oftener than once, in that inscription. P. Lupi's copy (9) of the Maltese inscription exhibits the *Aleph* (whose ducts were perhaps better preserved when that transcript was taken than at the time Count

(8) Sig. Ant. Fran. Gor. *Difes. dell' Alphab. Etrusc.* p. 102. & Tab. III. p. 109. In Firenze, 1749. Lup. *Letter. Philolog.* Let. XI. p. 6.

(9) Gor. *Difes. dell' Alphab. Etrusc.* & Lup. ubi sup.

Caylus's copy was sent him) as it appears on my Punic and Phœnician coins.

## IV.

The eighteenth letter of the first line of this inscription is not *He*, as M. l'Abbé supposes, but *Mem*. This is rendered indisputable by the form of the element itself, as well as by the tenor of the inscription. That the form of the element perfectly resembles, or rather is altogether the same with, that of *Mem*, is sufficiently evident from M. l'Abbé's own plate, and even more so from the copy communicated to Sig. Gori by P. Lupi. And with regard to the tenor of the inscription, I shall not scruple to affirm, that this absolutely requires the letter to be *Mem*, and not *He*. For otherwise the word צִרָא, TZORA, or TZVRA, must denote Tyre; whereas the name of that city in Syriac, supposed by M. l'Abbé to be the language of the inscription, as well as Chaldee, Hebrew, Samaritan, and Arabic, is צִר, TZOR, or TZVR. To which we may add, that the four last elements of this line cannot form the word הַנְּרִי, HOC VOTVM, THIS VOW, as M. l'Abbé asserts, because that would be neither Syriac nor sense; as the monument could not with any manner of propriety be termed a vow, and consequently could not be transmitted down to future ages under the denomination of THIS VOW. It was not a vow, but erected in pursuance of a vow. The eighteenth and the three preceding letters then form the words צִרָא, TYRVS MATER, or rather here TYRI MATRIS, OF TYRE THE METROPOLIS, as we find that city

city actually styled on several Tyrian coins. This sense is perfectly consonant to the tenor of the inscription, and will therefore, I flatter myself, be readily admitted by (10) M. l'Abbé.

But to put the point here insisted on even beyond the possibility of a doubt, I shall beg leave farther to observe, that I have two of those Phœnician coins (11) attributed by M. l'Abbé to the city of Marathus; one of which exhibits the first letter *Mem* as it stands in his alphabet, ( *44* ) and the other exactly as he has presented to our view the pretended form ( *41* ) of *He*. Such demonstration as this must convince every one, that is not resolved to be proof against conviction, and be allowed absolutely decisive in this affair.

V.

Though M. l'Abbé has not inserted the last letter of the word עֲבָדוֹ, in the beginning of the second line, that element was nevertheless most certainly *Vau*. This is sufficiently manifest from P. Lupi's (12) copy, as well as from the vacant space after *Daleth*, which is capable of containing only a single letter, and that can be no other than *Vau*. Besides, יְבָרְכֵם, BENEDICAT ILLIS, NOT NOBIS, MAY HE BLESS, OR PROSPER, THEM, not US, the last word of the inscription, sets this point in the clearest light. The next word but one, וְאָחִי, has been rendered by M. l'Abbé Barthelemy ET FRATER MEVS, though ET FRATER EIVS must be allowed much more con-

(10) *Journal des Sçavans*, Aout 1760. p. 267-271.

(11) *Ibid.* p. 275.

(12) *Gor. & Lup. ubi sup.*



sonant to the tenor of the inscription. I am therefore inclined to believe, that the word **ואהי** ought to be considered as in regimen, or construction; and that the proper name **עבדאסר**, ABDASAR, is understood after the last mentioned term. Instances of such an ellipsis as this occur, in PSAL. lxxiv. 19. ISAI. xiv. 6. &c. and have been produced by Buxtorf, in the piece (13) referred to here. To which we may add, that the person of the verb **עבדו** strongly countenances, at least, if it does not give an absolute sanction to, what has been here proposed to the consideration of the learned.

## VI.

The proper name **עבדאסר**, in the second line of the inscription, was pronounced, as I apprehend, by the orientals ABDASAR, or ABDESER, not ABDASSAR. This is rendered not a little probable by the proper names ASAR-HADDON and TIGLATH-PIL-ESER, the *Samech* neither in ASAR nor ESER there having received a dagefch from the Masorites. The same (14) point is also confirmed by the Septuagint. It likewise appears from the Etruscan ÆSAR, which is evidently the same word with the Phœnician and Chaldee ASAR, or ESER, and in common with it denotes GOD. That ASAR, or ESER, in general signified GOD, is allowed by a (15) learned writer;

(13) Johan. Buxtorf. *Theſaur. Grammat. Ling. Sanct. Hebr.* p. 363. Bafilæ, 1663.

(14) 2 KING. xv. 29. xix. 37. ISAI. xxxvii. 38. EZR. iv. 2. Vid. etiam Matth. Hiller. *Onomast. Sacr.* p. 607, 608.

(15) Matth. Hiller. *Onomast. Sacr.* p. 596. Tubingæ, 1706.  
though

though that it was also applied to one particular deity, the words ASAR-HADDON, TIGLATH-PIL-ESER, &c. seem clearly to evince. The Gallic HESVS, taken by some for the god Mars, of a similar sound, may perhaps bring an accession of strength to what has been here advanced. The name ASAR, or ESER, therefore amongst the Phœnicians was probably both equivalent to the general term GOD, and likewise pointed out to them one particular deity. In ABD-ASAR, or ABD-ESER, it must have answered to BACCHUS, or DIONYSVS; the whole name corresponding with ΔΙΟΝΥΣΙΟΣ, BACCHICVS, OF OR BELONGING TO BACCHVS, THE SERVANT OF BACCHVS, the true import of the two words ABD-ASAR, or ABD-ESER, of which this Phœnician proper name is composed.

## VII.

With regard to the next proper name, אַסְרִימַר, אַסְרִימַר, or rather אַסְרִימַרְהַמַר, ASERIM-HAMMAR, M. l'Abbé and I differ considerably in our notions. He takes the fourth letter for *He*, and I for *Mem*. Now this character is exactly the same with that in the first line of the inscription, which I have already proved to be *Mem*, and consequently it must be considered as altogether the same element. Admit this, and the two words forming the proper name, אַסְרִימַרְהַמַר, or rather אַסְרִימַרְהַמַר, will immediately occur. I say אַסְרִימַרְהַמַר, or rather אַסְרִימַרְהַמַר, because such an ellipsis of the prefix (particularly (16) in the proper name עֵינִים-הַמֶּלֶךְ, or עֵינִים-הַמֶּלֶךְ) may sometimes be

(16) Id. *ibid.* p. 603, 608.

observed.

observed. In fine אַסְרִים־הַמַּר, or אַסְרִים־מַר, must be composed of אַסְרִים, ASERIM, (the Phœnician name of one of the kings of Tyre, (17) according to Menander Ephesius) and הַמַּר, HAMMAR, IPSE DOMINVS; the term מַר, MAR, entering into the composition of certain similar (18) names. Now ASERIM-HAMMAR being equivalent in Phœnician to the Greek, or rather Egyptian, SARAPION; the deity denominated SARAPI, or SARAPIS, in Egypt, must have assumed the name of ASERIM at Tyre, as from the inscription now before me may be very fairly inferred.

## VIII.

That the first letter of the third line is *Mem*, and not *He*, as M. l'Abbé is pleased to affirm, both the form itself and the sense of this part of the inscription seem evidently to prove. The figure here is altogether the same with that of the eighteenth element in the preceding line, and consequently must be allowed to represent *Mem*. The sense also evinces this, beyond the possibility of a doubt. For, I believe, it will be no easy matter to prove the reality of M. l'Abbé's word הַנְּבִי, or at least to render it intelligible here. But with respect to the word מִן, which I take the two first letters to form, equivalent in Syriac to the (19) Latin QVI (est), or IS QVI (est), it

(17) Menand. Ephes. apud Joseph. *Cont. Apion.* Lib. I.

(18) Matth. Hiller. ubi sup. p. 602, 603.

(19) Buxtorf. *Lex. Chald. & Syriac.* p. 301, 302.

clearly continues the sense, and is of course most perfectly consonant to the tenor of the inscription.

## IX.

What has been observed of the last mentioned character is equally applicable to the eighth and twentieth elements of the same line. They are both indubitably *Mem.* This, not only by the powers of the letters with which they are immediately connected, but likewise by what has been already advanced, is rendered indisputably clear. 'Tis worthy observation, that M. l'Abbé Fourmont was the first (20) who took this character for *He*; and pretended, absurdly enough, to deduce it from the *Estrangelo* form of that element.

## X.

With regard to the last word but one of the inscription, כממעקלים, or כממעקלים, it seems to be composed of the inseparable particles, מ, כ, and the participle מעקלים, or מעקלים, TORTVOSI, INFLEXI, TORTE NAVIGANTES, or HVC ET ILLVC AGITATI. This therefore may be appositely enough rendered, TANQVAM EX IIS QVI HVC ET ILLVC AGITANTVR, INFLEXO CVRSV (vel ITINERE) JAC-TANTVR, TORTE NAVIGANT, &c. It may also be translated, with sufficient propriety, QVVM HVC ET ILLVC AGITATI fuerint, QVVM TORTE NAVIGA-VERINT, &c. WHEN THEY SHALL BE TOSSED (upon

(20) *Saggi di Dissertazion. Accademich. &c. di Corton.* Tom. III. p. 90. In Roma, 1741.

the sea) HITHER AND THITHER, WHEN WITH MANY TURNINGS AND WINDINGS THEY SHALL PLOUGH THE OCEAN, &c. the particle **ו** sometimes denoting QVVM, and a pleonasmus or redundancy of **ו** having not been antiently uncommon, according to (21) Noldius.

The two Maltese stones therefore adorned with this inscription, similar to many others with which we are supplied by the remains of antiquity, must be considered as votive monuments. They were erected by Dionysius and Sarapion, both Tyrians, and the sons of Sarapion, in consequence of a vow, to Hercules, surnamed the CONDUCTOR, or the CHIEF CONDUCTOR, for a prosperous voyage. That the inscription runs in the third person, not the first, as M. l'Abbé Barthelemy asserts, from the correspondent Greek one, and the considerations already offered in support of this point, seems sufficiently clear. This the last word **יִרְכֵם**, BENEDICET ILLIS, not NOBIS, HE WILL BLESS THEM, not US, or BENEDICAT IPSIS, MAY HE BLESS THEM, not US, must be allowed also indubitably to prove.

## XI.

If the preceding observations should meet with the approbation of the Royal Society, the following translations of the inscription now before me may perhaps not prove unacceptable to the learned. [See the Inscription, TAB. XI.]

(21) Christ. Nold. *Concordant. Particular. Ebræo-Chald.* p. 353, 354, 470. *Jenæ*, 1734.

לאדנן למלקרת בעל צר אמ נדר  
 עברו עבדאסר ואחי אסרממר  
 מן בן אסרממר בן עבדאסר כממע  
 קלם ינרנם

DOMINO NOSTRO MELCARTHO DEO (tutelari) TYRI  
 MATRIS VOTVM  
 FECERVNT ABDASARVS ET FRATER (ABDASARI)  
 ASERIM—HAMMARVS  
 IS QVI FILIVS (est) ASERIM-HAMMARI FILII AB-  
 DASARI—IIS  
 TORTE NAVIGANTIBVS (vel HVC ET ILLVC INFLEXO  
 CVRSV AGITATIS) BENEDICAT.

ABDASAR AND HIS BROTHER ASERIM-HAMMAR WHO (also) IS THE SON OF ASERIM-HAMMAR THE SON OF ABDASAR HAVE MADE A VOW TO MELCARTHUS (OR HERCULES) THE (tutelary) GOD OF TYRE THE METROPOLIS—IN THEIR TURNINGS AND WINDINGS (OR IN THEIR CROOKED NAVIGATION) MAY HE BLESS (OR PROSPER) THEM.

That M. l'Abbé Barthelemy's explication of the inscription here considered is at least somewhat involved, from the foregoing remarks, seems sufficiently clear; whether or no his obscurity, or mistakes, if any such there be, are removed by the illustration now offered, the Royal Society will be the best able to decide.

But though M. l'Abbé has perhaps not arrived at a complete interpretation of this inscription, he has nevertheless thrown much more light upon it than  
 either

either M. le Commandeur (22) de Marne, or M. l'Abbé Fourmont, or indeed any other person who attempted, before his memoir was read, an explication of it. This cannot but be acceptable to the lovers of antiquity, and must intitle him to the thanks of the learned world.

## XII.

The language of the inscription is a mixture of Hebrew and Syriac. The first word, לֵאדָרְנָן, must be looked upon as Syriac; as may likewise the sixth term, נָרָר, on account of the sense wherein it is used. The seventh is Hebrew, as well as Syriac. The ninth, however we render it, is undoubtedly Hebrew; and the eleventh, however this may have escaped M. l'Abbé, as certainly Syriac. The two last words are manifestly Hebrew, though in the last syllable of the former of them *Yod* is suppressed. But this is intirely consonant to the Phœnician form, the coins struck at Sidon generally exhibiting לְצֶרְנִים, for לְצֶרְנִים, with the *Yod* expunged. The term בֶּן, SON, used twice in this inscription, is here also apparently Hebrew. We cannot therefore infer from the monument under consideration, as (23) M. l'Abbé Barthelemy has done, that “there is scarce any “difference at all between the Phœnician and Syriac “languages.” Nor will M. (24) de Guignes me-

(22) *Saggi di Dissertazion. Accademich. &c. di Corton.* Tom. I. Par. I. p. 25—34. In Roma, 1735. & Tom. III. p. 89—111. In Roma, 1741.

(23) M. de Guign. ubi sup. p. 47.

(24) Id. ibid. p. 60.

rit the attention of the learned, when he is pleased to assert, that “ M. l’Abbé Barthelemy has actually “ proved, from this inscription, that the Phœnician “ language is nothing else but the Syriac tongue.”

## XIII.

As the most antient Phœnician language was almost intirely the same with the (25) Hebrew, the Syriac words that occur in this inscription, together with what has been already remarked of the forms of the letters it contains, announce it to have been of a later date. The figure of the *Koph* in particular agrees in all respects with the form of the same element exhibited by a coin struck at Achola, or Achulla, as the name appears on this medal, in the Augustan age. That at this time, and even earlier, as well as later, several Syriac words should have been used by the Phœnicians of Tyre, can be no matter of surprize, when we consider, that the Jews themselves, during this period, spoke a language extremely similar to, if not almost intirely the same with, the Syriac.

## XIV.

I must beg leave farther to remark, that, by the assistance of the monument now before me, two Phœnician proper names have been discovered, which have never hitherto in any of the antient historians occurred. As the *Aleph* in  $\text{𐤀𐤍}$  was, however, sometimes pronounced like E, and perhaps I, the word

(25) Bochart. *Chan.* Lib. II. cap. 1.



ABDISSAR, (26) met with by M. l'Abbé Barthelemy on an antient coin, and ABDASAR, exhibited by the Maltese stones, may by some possibly be considered as nearly the same name. Should this prove really the case, M. l'Abbé must be allowed to have been extremely lucky in meeting with a proper name so similar to, or rather scarce distinguishable from, one preserved in an inscription, he was just going to explain. Be this as it will, the word ABDASAR appears, as a part of another Phœnician inscription, on a piece of marble, found amongst the ruins of Citium; which was presented by Charles Gray, Esquire, member of Parliament for Colchester, and fellow of the Royal Society, a gentleman of great merit and erudition, to the University of Oxford.

## XV.

To what has been here advanced it may not be improper to subjoin an alphabetic table of the Phœnician letters forming the Maltese inscription, which M. l'Abbé Barthelemy has lately attempted to explain; [Vide TAB. XI.] and on which, in this paper, I have been endeavouring to throw some additional light.

The form of the *Thau* in the table, not bearing the least resemblance to a cross, approaches pretty near that of *Tzade* (27), as exhibited by several of my

(26) *Mem. de Litter. &c.* Tom. XXVIII. p. 597. A Paris, 1761.

(27) Of all the letters in the Phœnician alphabet none perhaps has a greater variety of forms than *Tzade*. One of these, that not seldom occurs upon the Tyrian and Sidonian coins, pretty much resembles the character which M. l'Abbé Barthelemy takes

Tyrian

Tyrian and Sidonian coins ; though these characters, as upon inspection will appear, are sufficiently distinguishable from each other.

for *Thau*, in the Phœnician inscription here explained. Now this very figure of *Tzade* immediately precedes the numeral characters in the exergues of several Sidonian coins, and is itself immediately preceded by the letter *Schin*. Those two elements therefore, as occurring on the medals of Sidon, and preceding a date, I took for the initial letters of the words **שנת צרן**, THE YEAR OF SIDON ; and evinced this by such reasons as, I apprehended, could not be easily overthrown. But M. l'Abbé Barthelemy believes the two elements to form the word **ש**, YEAR ; and has been followed in this notion by M. Pellerin, who seems a little to exult, and triumph, on the occasion. However, I still am fully convinced of the truth of what I formerly advanced ; and am hindered from coming into M. l'Abbé's opinion, by the following considerations.

1. The very character I took for *Tzade* is the first letter of the words **צ**, TZOR, or TZVR, and **צרון**, TZIDON, TYRE and SIDON, on several Tyrian and Sidonian coins. This directly evinces the point in question. Some of these coins are now in my possession, very well preserved, and undoubtedly genuine.

2. The word **ש**, ANNVS, YEAR, or THE YEAR, does not occur in any of the oriental languages, or dialects, that I have hitherto been conversant with ; the term **שנה**, which is rarely used, being a different word. Nor can M. l'Abbé authenticate the pretended **ש**, by observing, or rather without any foundation roundly asserting, that as from **בנת** is deduced **נת**, so from **שנת** may be derived **ש**, SCHAT. For we certainly know, that there is such a word as **נת**, whereas **ש** has not hitherto been found. We are not at liberty to frame terms out of our own heads, in order to serve an indefensible hypothesis ; nor will a grammatical conjecture, as I apprehend, realize a non-entity.

3. The numbers expressed by Phœnician numeral characters on certain coins that indisputably belong to Sidon do not amount to 112. From whence, as I formerly observed, we may infer, that the æra referred to by those coins was the later epoch of Sidon. Which if we admit, any year deduced from that æra

The

The figure of the *Koph* here is by no means the most antient representation of that element. It

may, with the utmost propriety, be stiled THE YEAR OF SIDON ; and that appellation may be more naturally supposed to be pointed at by the letters *Schin* and *Tbau*, prefixed to the dates on the small Sidonian coins, than the single word at length denoting THE YEAR.

4. On one or two medals in my possession, the element *Schin*, as the initial letter of  $\text{שנש}$ , THE YEAR, OR IN THE YEAR, not the whole word denoting THE YEAR, appears before the numeral characters in the exergue. From whence it seems clearly to follow, that the elements preceding those characters ought to be taken for initial letters, and consequently that the character I denominate *Tzade* ought to be considered in that view.

5. The year exhibited by the first medal in my <sup>a</sup> plate of Phœnician coins, allowed by M. l'Abbé Barthelemy himself to belong to Sidon, and adorned with a numeral inscription, denoting THIRTY-SIX, cannot be the thirty-sixth year of the æra of Seleucus, because the Sidonians were then subject to Ptolemy Philadelphus, king of Egypt, in whose territories the supputation according to that epoch did not take place. The æra then to which the date on this coin refers must undoubtedly be the proper æra of Sidon, which commenced in the year of Rome 643. Nothing therefore can be more natural than to suppose, that the two alphabetic characters preceding the numeral inscription should be the initial letters of the words  $\text{שנת צרן}$ , THE YEAR OF SIDON, as I formerly ventured to suggest. From whence it seems also clearly to follow, that the notation by me considered in a former paper did not prevail at Sidon before the 207th year of the æra of Seleucus, nearly coincident with the 643d of Rome.

6. If what has been here remarked should meet with the approbation of the learned, they will perhaps not so readily admit M. l'Abbé Barthelemy's pretended coins of Marathus to have appertained to that inconsiderable city. Besides, should this be allowed, which, I am persuaded, it will not, the notation they exhibit cannot well be supposed to have been introduced there before the later Sidonian æra commenced. For if the numeral

<sup>a</sup> See *Philosopb. Transact.* Vol. L. P. ii. Tab. XXXI. p. 791.

too much resembles the square or Chaldee *Koph*. The character denominated *Koppa*, visible on the

characters above-mentioned were not received in so large, opulent, and polite a city as Sidon, before the year of Rome 643; it is utterly improbable, that they should have been used at Marathus, or any other obscure place of Phœnicia, before the commencement of that year. Nay, it is highly probable, that the introduction of them there was posterior to it. Now if these numeral characters were first received at Marathus in the year of Rome 643, or rather a little after that year, some of M. l'Abbé's pretended coins of Marathus were struck there in the days of Strabo. But then, according to that excellent<sup>b</sup> author, the city was destroyed, and it's territory occupied by the Aradians, amongst whom it was divided by lot; so that the foregoing supposition is, at first sight, manifestly absurd. Farther, the word on these medals taken by M. l'Abbé to denote Marathus is frequently not מרת, as he supposes, but מרתב, though on some few of them part of the last letter only appears. This M. l'Abbé, without any manner of foundation, seems to think a new form of the *Ajin*<sup>c</sup>, and believes it to be the initial letter of the name of a month; though he had before, in a great measure at least, exploded the notion of such initial letters. In fine the considerations now submitted to the judgment of the learned absolutely determined me to cancel part of a sheet of a small work, put to the press here, in 1753; wherein I asserted, and endeavoured to prove, that those coins belonged to Marathus. This will be attested by the workmen I employed, and the IMPRIMATUR given me by the Rev. Dr. Brown, Master of University College, our worthy Vice-Chancellor, at that time. The cancelled part of a sheet is still in my hands.

7. In farther eviſion of what has been advanced, relative to the initial letters in the exergues of certain Sidonian coins; it may not be improper to observe, that a medal in my small collection exhibits the letter *Hbeth*, immediately after the numerical inscription in the exergue. This probably represents the word חצי, DIMIDIVM, HALF; as both that term and רבע, or רבחה, QVADRANS, QVARTER, are expressed at length on some

<sup>b</sup> Strab. *Geograph.* Lib. xvi. p. 1093. Amstelædami, 1707.

<sup>c</sup> *Journ. des Sav.* Aout 1760. p. 275. A Amsterdam, 1760.

<sup>d</sup> See Plate Fig.

medals of Croton, Corinth, and Syracuse, (28) as well as upon an inedited Punic coin in my small cabinet, was used for *Koph* by both the Phœnicians and Carthaginians in the earlier times. The form of the *Koph* likewise on a Punic medal, (29) that I formerly attempted to explain, was of a pretty high antiquity amongst those nations. Nor does (30) M. Pellerin merit any great attention, or regard, when he assigns that letter the power of *Aleph*; the character on the coin he refers to on this occasion seeming not to point out *Aleph*, but *Koph*. Nor has he so much as offered to interpret the greatest

of the <sup>e</sup> rarer Samaritan coins. Hence it should seem incontestably clear, that the two Phœnician elements,  $\Psi$   $\Psi$ , prefixed to the same sort of numerical characters, on similar medals, must be viewed either in the same or a similar light; which, in conjunction with the initial letters preserved on the famous Samaritan medal of Bologna, formerly mentioned <sup>f</sup>, must set the point here insisted on beyond dispute.

8. From the preceding observations it seems manifestly to appear, not only that the alphabetic character immediately prefixed to the aforesaid numerals is *Tzade*, but likewise that the coins on which these are impressed must be of a later date. Hence we may conclude, that the times in which those pieces were struck may, with a sufficient degree of precision, be ascertained.

(28) Joan. Bapt. Biancon. *De antiq. Lit. Hebræor. & Græcor. Libel.* p. 57, 63. Bononiæ, 1748.

(29) *De Num. quibusd. Sam. & Phœn. Dissert.* p. 86, 87. Oxonii, 1750.

(30) *Recueil de Medailles de Peuples et de Villes, &c.* Tom. III. p. 141, 142. A Paris, 1763.

<sup>e</sup> *Numism. Antiq. &c.* à Thom. Pembr. & Mont. Gomer. Com. *Collect.* P. 2. T. 85. Num. 7. Adr. Reland. *De Num. Veter. Hebræor.* Tab. Non. Num. 3. p. 202. Trajecti ad Rhenum, 1709.

<sup>f</sup> *Philosoph. Transact.* Vol. L. P. ii. p. 792.

part of the legend, to which it belongs. Tis certain, that this character, as well as that on the Punic medal above-mentioned, bears so perfect a resemblance to the figure of *Koph* preserved by a coin of Cosyra, explained by the learned Sig. Abate Venuti, that it cannot well be taken for any other letter. As the objection therefore (31) offered by M. Pellerin to my notion of this character is destitute of every support, it must fall to the ground of course; and consequently no farther defence of that notion can be deemed requisite, or expected from,

S I R,

Your most obedient humble servant,

Ch. Ch. Oxon.  
April 29, 1763.

John Swinton.

(31) *Recueil de Medailles de Peuples et de Villes, &c.* Tom. III. p. 141, 142, A Paris, 1763.

