

tion would be thoroughly appropriate. But *a stone*, a stone from the altar, is all that Canon Cheyne allows us. And on reference to his critical note, we find that whereas Gesenius and others translate the Hebrew word "*ritspah*" in this place by "*hot stone*," Canon Cheyne takes all the fire out of his exposition by the statement that "*ritspah* is not necessarily a hot stone," see Esther i. 6, &c. [where it means a *pavement*], and he adds, Vulg. rightly, *calculus*.

So that the golden altar of incense was built of *calculi*! It is more than doubtful whether the *calculus* of the Vulgate in this place has anything whatever to do with the materials of the altar. In ch. xxvii. 9, the word for stones of the altar is *lapides*, Hebrew *abanim*, a very different word. *Calculus* means a *pebble*, a small stone used for voting, a weight. To build an altar of loose *pebbles* is impossible; and to suggest that the altar of incense was a heap of pebbles, is absurd. The effect of a never-extinguished fire on pebbles would be to burst and pulverize them. Having come so far, one is moved to inquire further why the translation "live coal" has been exchanged for "stone" in this place by Canon Cheyne. To understand this we turn to the Hebrew Lexicon and Concordance. In the Concordance we find that the word *ritspah* appears altogether seven times. Here only, in Isaiah vi. 6, is it associated with fire. Everywhere else,—viz., in Esther i. 6, 2 Chron. vii. 3, and four times in Ezekiel's vision of the temple,—it is translated "*pavement*." All these instances, however, are later than the *exile*; Isaiah's vision is "in the year that King Uzziah died." Parallel to this expression in Isaiah vi. is the only earlier instance we can compare, where the substantive *retzeph* is used in connection with the food prepared for Elijah, a cake *baken on the coals* (1 Kings xix. 6). Instead of coals the revisers give us "hot stones" in their margin, anxious to maintain the connection between the fire and the pavement. Solomon's chariot *paved* (*râtzâph*) with love completes the list.

Thus at least it stands in the *Englishman's* Hebrew Concordance. I must confess to some little surprise when, on turning to Fürst's large Hebrew Concordance, I found