

derive it from a more primitive **حصن** *to be inaccessible* (*LA*, xvi, 275), and Guidi, *Della Sede*, 579, had seen that **حصن** was borrowed from the Syr. **ܡܚܨܢܐ**. Fraenkel, *Fremdw*, 235, 236, agrees with this on two grounds, firstly on the general ground that such things as fortresses are not likely to have been indigenous developments among the Arabs, and as a matter of fact all the place names compounded with **حصن** which Yāqūt collects in his *Muʿjam* are in Syria : secondly on philological grounds, for **حصن** *fortress* is not from a root *to be inaccessible* but from one *to be strong*, which we find in Heb. **חֲסִן** ;

Aram. **ܚܨܢܐ** ; Syr. **ܡܚܨܢܐ**,<sup>1</sup> of which the Arabic equivalent is **خَسَنَ** *to be hard, rough*. In the Targums **חֲסִנָּא** is *a store or warehouse*, but in the Syr. **ܡܚܨܢܐ** is properly a *fortress*. The word is frequently used in the old poetry and must have been an early borrowing.

**حِطَّة** (*Hitta*).

ii, 55 ; vii, 161.

Forgiveness.

Both passages are late and were a puzzle to the exegetes as we see from Baiḍawī's comment on them. The exegetes are in general agreed that the meaning is *forgiveness*, and many of the early authorities admitted that it was a foreign word. *TA*, v, 119, quotes al-Farrā as taking it to be Nabataean, and as-Suyūṭī's authorities take it to be Hebrew (*Itq*, 320, compared with *Mutaw*, 58).

As early as 1829 de Sacy in *JA*, iv, 179, pointed out that it was the Heb. **חֲטָא**, with which Geiger, 18, and Hirschfeld, *Beiträge*, 54 ff. ; *New Researches*, 107, agree, though Dvořák, *Fremdw*, 55, suggests the Syr. **ܚܬܐܐ** as a possibility, and Leszynsky, *Juden in Arabien*, 32, a derivation from **חֲטָא**. Horovitz, *JPN*, 198, points out that though it is clearly a foreign word, none of these suggested derivations is quite satisfactory, and the source of the word is still a puzzle.

<sup>1</sup> And perhaps the Eth. **ሐረክ** *to build*.